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TOOLS AND THE MAN

Tools and the Man

A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF THE FRENCH WORKINGMAN AND ENGLISH
CHARTISTS IN THE LITERATURE
OF 1830-1848

By

Helen Drusilla Lockwood, Ph.D.

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PREFACE

Some years ago when the writer first began teaching workers, a leader of the labor movement questioned whether it would not spoil them for the movement if they learned to love middle class art, for this art had been produced by a society hostile to them and could have no meaning for the makers of a new order. This seemed a challenge demanding study from a new angle. What had workers themselves written? What had been their relationship with writers of the main current of literature? The workers themselves asked questions many times, and their interest was usually in contemporary expressions. Queries about these at once led back to origins of class-consciousness and therefore to the first half of the nineteenth century. Literary outbursts of the workers accompanied their first revolts against the misery caused by the Industrial Revolution and the first formulation of their new ideals.

Studies of the English movement are easily accessible. There is, however, no full literary study of the French and only a few translations of verse have made known to English-speaking people the writings of French workers. It is these therefore that are mainly discussed here. But comparisons with the English have been drawn, for the movements of both countries are best understood in relation to each other. Together they shed new light on the whole problem of workers' expression.

The writer wishes to express her appreciation to Professor Ashley Thorndike for his inspiration and criticism throughout this work; to Professor Eunice Schenck of Bryn Mawr College who helped to open up issues of the middle century in French literature and whose interest has been an encouragement; to Mlle. S. Ottocar, who has helped with material from the Bibliothèque Nationale; to Professor Vida Scudder and Ellen Hayes, formerly professor at Wellesley College, who have read the manuscript; and to those

many women in industry who as the writer's students have challenged her whole concept of literature and society, and who by sharing with her some of the realities of their lives have set quivering with life many an outcry or hope of those pioneers who made the Revolution of 1848 or built the foundations of English workers' education, and who started the workers' modern literary tradition.

April, 1926.

CHAPTER I

AGRICOL PERDIGUIER AND THOMAS COOPER

For the last century values in literature have been shifting because of the forces released by the Industrial Revolution. New tools and a new class using them have begun to find their place not only as elements remoulding institutions, but as materials for art. Many lovers of beauty, shocked at the crudeness of the resulting expression have been blinded to the fact that it is the outgrowth of only a century and that it is part of a process as fundamental as any which produced the finished masterpieces which they worship. Most of the middle class, accepting aeroplanes and Ford factories as symbols of progress and raising outcries at the discomforts incident to the efforts of workmen to attain collective bargaining, forget that the real miracle is the emergence in Western European civilization of a new class of people into self-realization and speech. Even the workmen, thinking of themselves as "fighting entities" in the present labor movement or, in imitation of that part of the middle class which they see, setting up automobiles, jewels and sensational movies as the ends of life, sometimes miss the more profound meaning of their release. It is not without significance then for the student of literature as for the economist to trace beginnings, to see what values the pioneers of the working class sought, what was their relation to their tools, and to try to define what fresh elements of beauty their expression may have revealed or presaged. Such a study is no less important for the workman, for it may suggest to him that his present class-consciousness did not spring fully armed like Minerva from Jupiter's brow, but grew by definite stages from early struggles in the name of "all who work", and that art, which he has been inclined to scorn as a futile decoration of the middle classes, is an integral part of life, one to which he has contributed and may be expected to contribute more.

The kernel of the matter lies in England and France of 1815-1850, the two countries in which machine industry first developed on a large scale, and in which a threefold change in the place of the workingman first appeared. The machines took away his tools and made him a member of a new class hostile to the tool-owners; the

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spread of education taught him to feel a new dignity, opened to him the world of literature and often made him a writer himself; his misery and his attempts to free himself from it became the absorbing interest of most of the great writers of the period. Curiously enough, though it was in England that the tragedy of the worker was farthest advanced, it was in France that the workers' revolution occurred. It was in France that the most interesting writers appeared among the workmen. It was in France that the poets, novelists and critics made a hero of the glorious new proletarian and often took an active part in his efforts to change his own conditions; those in England were no less concerned with his problems—they wrote pictures of his life, they analyzed his wrongs, but they called upon the powerful to right them.

In 1805 two men were born who are typical of this threefold place of the new class. Thomas Cooper was the only son of an English dyer of Leicester; Agricol Perdiguier was one of the seven children of a carpenter of Morlières near Avignon in the south of France. Both became leaders of workmen—Cooper of the Chartists, Perdiguier of the men of the revolution; both of them were heroes of novels, Cooper of Kingsley's *Alton Locke* and Perdiguier of George Sand's *Le Compagnon du Tour de France;* both of them were writers, Cooper in the end devoting himself entirely to journalism and teaching, Perdiguier always carrying on his carpenter's trade along with his literary efforts. Both men wrote autobiographies which are important as revelations of the mind of the worker of their time and as vivid, entertaining human documents.

After the Revolution of 1848 had failed in France, Perdiguier was sent into exile. "Not being able to dwell in the flesh in France," he wrote, "I at least wanted to dwell there in spirit and travel over it in thought; that comforted me." So during 1852 and 1853 he gathered up memories of his childhood and of his "tour of France" into the two volumes of his *Mémoires,* which he succeeded in getting published in Switzerland in 1854. His father, Pierre, a staunch republican of the Great Revolution and a captain of Napoleon's army in Italy, was arrested in 1815 as one of Napoleon's followers. Agricol's earliest memories were colored with republicanism, with the brutality of the troops pillaging the country after Napoleon's defeat and superstitious tales of terrible devils haunting the forests, with terror for his father's safety and anger at the new government

in power. But happier scenes came back to him too: days in the sunshine of the south, days of watching insects with absorbed interest, days of children's games when he was always the leader, days of extraordinary adventures as he went on errands with the family mule. For it was a toilsome childhood.

In ordinary times the family was not in discomfort, for Pierre was a skilful joiner and besides owned some land which his wife had inherited from her father. But determined to make his children not "gentlemen and ladies but vigorous workers", he set them at all sorts of farm tasks for which they were paid a *sou* a day. On rainy days they worked in his carpenter shop where he was severe in the standards he set and ruthless with any awkwardness. Over and over again Agricol comments that his father did well, and all through his life repsect for good work, inculcated from the time he was seven or eight, was central in his philosophy.

In comparison with learning to work Pierre considered education in school a minor detail—girls had no need to read and write, boys hardly more. "This thought was without doubt born of a bit of egoism", says his son in the gentle way so characteristic of him. "But be it said that the joiner had a numerous family, that he could not make lettered men and scholars of us, that he had need of our arms and that happily he knew very well how to make use of them". But the children did go to the village school, their mother paying for the four girls with money she earned at making babies' bonnets, the father for the three boys, 1 franc 50 centimes for reading and writing. The value for the children was dubious, for the first master beat them constantly whether they deserved it or not; the next one did not beat them, but his system of education was no better—they learned to figure only incompletely, to write a little and to read. But what reading! They were plunged into Latin and then into French, Provençal youngsters that they were and therefore speaking a dialect very different from French, and the books were *The Duty of a Christian, Holy Week* and *The Imitation of Christ.* "We might as well have been given Hebrew", comments Perdiguier, and he interjects a discourse on suitable education for working children. After two or three years of this sort of schooling, he had to go to work.

One other influence in his childhood was important, that of his mother's father, Gaspard Gounin. "His house was the house of the

poor, the refuge, the asylum of beggars. He received them in his kitchen, dipped them all out some soup, let them pass the evenings with him, and then gave each one a sheet and sent them to bed in a big room, a sort of attic called *la Jasse,* . . . I was very young when he died, but I did not forget him; I seem to see him yet with his three-cornered hat, his big, long grey vest, his short breeches, his woollen gaiters, reaching up to his knees, his big cane, his back a little bent, his face so venerable and good. I must say that I never saw a man equal to him. He familiarized me with poverty, with the poor; he made me the friend and brother of all men. Gaspard Gounin was not of this time; he was a citizen of the reign of Saturn, without greed, without ambition, not clinging to anything as especially his own.

"He had scarcely any of the narrow feeling of thine and mine.

"Was he in the fields? He admired and sometimes permitted himself to take a grape from the first bunch that he found, to gather a bit of fruit from the first tree in front of him. But one could use the same liberty in the midst of his vines, on his property; he never complained.

" 'All that belongs to the Lord', he said."

The grandson seems to have had much of the kindliness and gentleness of the old man, for there is never a flicker of the harshness of Pierre Perdiguier in him, and the years of his later life are a long story of generosity to those who had need, of attempts to teach his fellow workers values more important than those of property.

But meanwhile he was learning the joiner's trade with his father. The severity, sometimes even cruelty of Pierre's regime had driven the other sons into other trades. It drove Agricol to try to persuade his father to let him go away to work. When he was just past sixteen, he was apprenticed to a master carpenter whom his father knew in Avignon. It was a leap from the frying-pan into the fire. He got his food and bed, nothing more—not a bit of money, not a word of encouragement. Every week day he had to get up at five o'clock and work until eight or nine at night; on Sundays, he put the shop in order; sometimes after his regular day, he was made to get up at eleven and work all night. Worst of all he could not progress in his trade under his master who did not teach him all the necessary processes and who never allowed him to put parts to-

gether. A year was all he could endure. When he left, the master gave him no pay on the ground that he had earned no more than his keep, and as if that were not enough, lost no opportunity afterward to vent his rancor and hatred upon him. Perdiguier was more fortunate with his second master, who taught him to make doors and who set him to do some fine work in a church. From this time he was the workman through and through, proud of his skill, honoring his trade and striving to uphold its standards. He learned the meaning of assocation among the workers, he joined them, he came to be their leader.

His first experiences in the new shop plunged him at once into the strife of workers' organizations. His materials had a way of disappearing, or something was mysteriously the matter with his tools. All sorts of trying jokes were played on him constantly. What was it all about?

The only trade organization in France was a system of secret societies called "compagnonnage". The stone-cutters, the carpenters, the joiners and the locksmiths each had organizations established in various important towns all through France. They were relics of societies of the Middle Ages and as rich in feuds handed down from generation to generation as in traditions of workmanship and defense of the workers' interests with the employers. In each town the first companion, called *rouleur,* searched for work for the other companions, made arrangements with employers so that the companions were assured of reasonable conditions and the employers of good work, acted as arbitrator if there were complaints on either side. If wages were lowered, the society put the employer under a ban for a certain number of years or for always and he could not get any member of that group to work for him. On the other hand the employer could be sure that workmen sent by the *rouleur* would be of high quality, and he knew exactly where to find the workers he might need for a particular piece of work, for the society could draw on special skill from all over France.

It was the custom for members to make the "tour of France" at an early age, that is, to journey from one town to another, stopping in each one to work, to become acquainted with the brothers, to learn new methods, to see the country. Through the *rouleur* they could always be sure of work if there was any to be had at all. They were under strict discipline; they had to work where he told

them; they had to stay in a given town until he allowed them to leave; they had to live up to the rules of the society with the strictest loyalty. If a member was found to be dishonest or if he proved unworthy in any way, he was put out of the society and as a result was likely to find serious difficulty in getting work. In each town the members lived at a sort of inn belonging to the society and supervised by a woman called the "mother", who looked after the personal welfare of the companions and who was always treated with the greatest respect. Here meetings were held, and fêtes and initiation ceremonies, marvellous secret affairs, solemn and dramatic.

In 1820 and for some years afterward, *compagnonnage* was a force to reckoned with in France, for there was a membership of some 200,000. Could all the groups have joined, they might have had growing influence in the movement of the increasingly class-conscious workers. But there were rival groups within single trades. The locksmiths and the carpenters were split into factions, one belonging to Master Jacques, the other to Solomon. One called themselves the *devorants,* the other the *gavots* or "companions of the *devoir*[1] of liberty." Whenever a *devorant* met a *gavot,* it was his duty to attack him; the *gavots* were to avoid provoking a fight if possible. Fierce battle often wasted the lives of good workmen, sometimes over trade rivalry, sometimes over stupid personal matters, and all because of some ancient tradition such as the murder of one of their masters in the building of the temple of Solomon. Occasionally, as in the strike of the carpenters in Paris in 1845, they joined in an effective struggle with the masters over wages, but only too rarely. It may have been that their disunion was the reason why the government never seems to have tried to stop the whole organization although there were laws against associations, and why it only occasionally interferred to arrest a few members when they fought too violently. It was after all perhaps to its advantage to have strong groups of workmen at odds with each other.

It was into the midst of these conflicts that Agricol Perdiguier was plunged at the outset of his apprenticeship. His first master had been a *devorant;* he new one was a *gavot* and so were the men in the shop. Inevitably then he was subjected to every kind of an-

[1] *Devoir* means duty or obligation. Its use to name a unit of a trade organization suggests fine overtones of responsibility and dignity.

noyance. But it was equally characteristic of the system that he won favor with the new group by his skill in work. Once he had proved himself in this, there was no further trouble, and he was soon ready to join their *devoir*. "These *gavots*," he said, "whom their enemies had painted to me as so black, so frightful that their very name made me tremble, appeared charming to me now. They took me walking with them Sundays and to the house of their 'mother' several times. . . . I saw with pleasure and joy young men from all points of France, living as brothers, helping each other, mutually supporting each other. The calm, the honesty, the respect which ruled in this house struck me very much."

The first companion got him his next place, one where he made "walnut dressers, with curving cross pieces on the doors, mouldings made by hand, and stars, hearts and other ornaments carved on the great cross pieces at the top and bottom." The day when machines would do all this carving and when the problem of the finisher would be merely to saw off lengths and nail them together, had not yet come. The joiner who made furniture or who finished the inside of houses, needed to understand design as well as to be skilled in the use of his tools. The societies provided him with opportunities, for in almost every town they had a well known member who could teach design to the younger men. Agricol was soon spending all of his "spare" time learning, that is, usually from nine to eleven at night. He remarks in his *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* that the worker must always improve himself at the expense of his food and his sleep; and later indeed he paid by losing his health. But for the present he "designed plans of mouldings and learned the five orders of architecture. I had facility, taste, passion," he adds, "I wanted to learn; I made the best use of my time." He kept at it later during his journey through France, at Marseilles where he was set to copying the drawings of the teacher—"Mine were good in line," he comments, "but much too highly colored, a fault common with workers"—and at Bordeaux, always devoting the hours after work to it. Finally he himself was able to teach the companions, but that was much later.

Meanwhile he worked at Avignon for something under four years. Toward the beginning of 1824 when he was not quite twenty, he and another started off together on their tour of France. What a feast there was in honor of their departure! And with what high

hearts the two youths were conducted to the gate by the whole society! How full of adventure as the farwell songs were sung and the coach rattled away bearing them to Marseilles and, miracle of miracles, the sea—"O sea, sea, how shall I speak the emotion that you made me feel!" Confident because of the letters from their first companion they sought out the first companion of Marseilles, who got them work. What experiences with masters here—one who would not repair broken tools, another who slyly copied Agricol's designs and pretended they were his, who found fault with insignificant details and let real mistakes slip by, a third who was highly skilled himself and admired by his men, who had curious transports of anger and of religion, who loved to tell stories during which no one must even work, and who then turned the shop into a cyclone of activity to make up for lost time! There were Sundays when groups of workers went off on boating trips—a race between a boat and a swimmer, songs, a supper of fish. "What rapture! Ah, but it takes little to delight the soul of the worker." There were walks alone in the mountains and by the seaside, and the ecstasy of youthful melancholy. There were the lively people of Marseilles, always ready with a gay word and a laugh. Indeed the young worker found a measure of light and color and happiness in this life though on weekdays he toiled from five in the morning till seven at night and then spent the hours from eight to eleven at drawing-lessons.

Next he went to Nimes where the architectural remains of the ancient Romans filled him with enthusiasm. Then on to Montpellier where he arrived without a *sou,* but thanks to *compagnonnage* had work and credit with the "mother", where above all he was at last received as a full "companion." In the traditional ceremony he was given his society name, Avignonnais-la-Vertu, which is to say Dweller-of-Avignon-Virtue, the cane which all companions carried, and the blue and white ribbon streamers. He was formally admonished that a companion must be a model for other workers. The solemn formula of initiation was spoken, "Guide them in the way of honor, knowledge, glory, uprightness, virtue." Then he worked seven months at Béziers and left because of his master's fury when he had slivered off the end of a candle to grease his saw. He went to Bordeaux, where his influence with his comrades grew so strong that he was made chief of a group to start a store for them. As

he became prominent, he began to realize aspects of arbitrariness in the authority of the leaders of the organization. He naively spoke out against wrongs that he saw. At Nantes, the next town in his tour, he paid for his frankness. He kept meeting obstacles within the society. When he was seriously ill from living with a companion who had consumption, the society neglected him. Then, although it was obvious that he was not well enough to be of use in Nantes, it was with the greatest difficulty that he got his permission to leave for Chartres. He was troubled by the hidden rancors which he could not probe.

As he journeyed into the north of France, he was further saddened, for in the midst of rich, fertile country, he saw pathetic, miserable children begging. But his two weeks of rest and recuperation in Chartres gave him unadulterated joy with their long hours in the cathedral, their freedom for beauty and thought, opportunities for association with the people of the town whose simple pleasures and lack of tumultous passions pleased him. Southern provincial that he started out, he was learning to know the variety in all France; he was learning the working conditions in different places, he was feeling the centuries of her history. At last Paris! But here the workers were less friendly to each other than in the provincial cities, the companions had to find their own work and provide their own tools, and the societies were mere shells of what they were elsewhere. Only ten days there therefore, but what delight over the beauties of the city and what shrewd analysis of the quality of the Parisians, what cordial detestation of the comedy he saw at the Theâtre Française with its adulteries and its general moral corruption! Then on to Lyons where there was an immense number of companions and where he was elected first companion.

It was not for nothing that he had analyzed the workings of the *devoirs* in each city or that he had been started in life by a family of high integrity and devotion. As leader of his group he struggled indefatigably for a spirit of peace and excellence of workmanship. Early in the morning he visited shop after shop all around Lyons searching for work for his men. He tells how one morning he succeeded in getting twelve places. He comments on trouble he had with one Poitevin-la-Clef-des-Coeurs, one of their own members who had formerly been very active for workers' rights, but who, now that he was a master, was hard on his men. Again and again Perdiguier

tried him, but finally the society had to ban him. Perdiguier conducted certain expulsions to keep up the moral and financial tone of the group, courageous in facing anger, free from rancor and apparently entirely without self interest. His *Mémoires* are touched with complacence as he recalls these efforts, but perhaps after all he is sound when he suggests that people are hard to govern because they are badly governed and that if governors of states would put as much disinterestedness into their policies as he did, they could do vast good.

After nearly a year in Lyons, he left for Avignon and then his little home town of Morliéres. His first great adventure was complete after four years and a half. He had noted that in making the "tour of France" the youths from cities were likely to waste their time on idle pleasures and give less time to serious study than those from the country or the suburbs of cities, and therefore learn little from the tour. He had been of those who had profited. He had seen much of France. He had been chosen as a leader of his group, although scarcely twenty-four. He had become a markedly skilful workman. He had reflected on the place of the worker in society. He had discovered the world of literature and history, and he had himself begun to write for the enlightenment of other workmen.

He had not seen the France of factories. Only on a later journey did he see the vast new shops at Nantes where twelve hundred workmen were employed, and a railroad bridge that spanned the river from Tarascon to Beaucaire. It was still true that at the yearly Fête of Sainte Anne, the festival of his trade group, the patrons and their wives and children were invited and the patrons in their turn gave their workers fêtes—not the later charitable affairs, but delightful celebrations where masters and men, knowing each other well, played together equally. And what a day it was, that Fête of Sainte Anne with mass first of all in the morning, the companions marching to the church from the house of the mother, and then elaborate ceremonies of initiation of new companions and election of new officers. Gay processions of jaunty workers, bright ribbons streaming from the canes, music, and hours and hours of dancing—they knew how to enjoy life, those French workmen. Or there was a different kind of gathering, sinister and futile—fierce, bloody battle between societies, flight from the officers of the law,

funerals of brothers killed in vain loyalty. Or a more fruitful strife in which each society tried to do the best work, their best workmen chosen as representatives and competing to carve the best pulpit perhaps, the prize-giving made the occasion of another great fête.

There were strikes, too, for wages were mostly very low. In 1827 Perdiguier saw one in Nîmes when all the brothers helped the strikers. Looking back at it from 1853 he justifies it in a simple, clear explanation of how competition lowered wages, how the workers were unable to control the price of necessities and the strike was the only way by which they could get enough to live. Turning to the government he begs it to allow strikes. "Without workers what would society be? Would there be rich? powerful? great? princes? kings? Punish them for acts of violence, but leave them free to state the price of their work. Let the workers protect themselves, debate their interests, raise their wage which is not enough to feed them; permit them to live by their work and in virtue. That they may help their fathers and mothers, take care of their children, uplift themselves, become more and more great, let us make a society more just, more beautiful, more happy."

For Perdiguier the problem was from the outset a much greater one than that of purely material values. It was significant that his nickname was Avigonnais-la-Vertu. It must be enlightened workers who take their part in the new society. One of the reasons why he most hated the futile feuds between groups was that a youth became swallowed up by hatreds of his group and any broad understanding became impossible. "How are we to instruct ourselves when hatred and foolish passions put a thick band over our eyes?" And learning early became one of his central interests.

As a child he had known Aesop's fables, the Bible and some of the old French *chansons de geste*. At Bordeaux he fell in with a worker who declaimed the *Othello* or *Hamlet* of Ducis, or Racine's *Phèdre*. From that time on he developed a passion for reading, especially for "sombre, terrible dramas"; the more dead at the end, the more sublime they seemed. He tells of buying four volumes of Voltaire's dramatic works and the joy that came over him. "I am a possessor of the dramatic masterpieces of Voltaire! I have some tragedies then! I went at top speed to sit on the grass of the public garden; and there, all alone, I went through my volumes. I read

verse; I read prose, and beautiful prose of which the name at that time as to the *bourgeois gentilhomme,* as to the great majority of my comrades among the workers, was not known to me. My friends also read my tragedies and like me they were enchanted. . . . A new world was opened for me. My intelligence grew. The wars of the companions which had already seemed to me stupid, became more horrble and more abominable in my eyes." A whole new world in these volumes, a world of poetry, of dramatic action, of reach back to the tragedies of the ancients, the names at least of the great Greeks, of the great Frenchmen and even some English, Italian and Spanish. Later, in Lyons, he was able to buy more books, poetry, tragedy, satires, history. He read Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire Universelle,* which made so deep an impression on him that later he made a special point of recommending it for workers' libraries—they must know history. He also read Volney's *Ruines des Empires,* but though he liked several grand scenes here, he revolted from the author's basing "everything on egoism and impotence and his counting neither on the heart nor the soul." He reacted strongly against the philosophy of materialism for he did not want to be saddened by the theory of nothingness. At Chartres where he had not been working, he had occupied most of his time with reading and writing. He read and reread, and he wrote songs.

How he began to write songs is one of the most enlightening pages for one who wants to understand the French worker-writer. He tells how on Sundays the members of the societies often went to the café where they drank and sang. "Put yourselves in our place," he urges. "In the morning at the bench at five o'clock sharp, in the evening not leaving until eight has struck, and that six days a week, winter, summer, and always! and always! The seventh was our day of rest, of recreation. But strangers in the town, not rich, not having a home or family or relatives, no club such as people of the world find everywhere, no drawing-rooms, gardens, parks, hounds, hunting, fishing, spectacles, or games, . . . what were we to do, to become, where were we to go, to pass our time, to sit down, to rest, how were we to amuse ourselves, to distract ourselves for a moment? Should we live or die!

"Let us live! but wisely and soberly, honestly, that is my thought; but a little gaily if possible.

"God has given us life, let us not make it unhappy, or lessen it

with voluntary troubles, with moral torture; that would be suicide, a crime, an insult to the Great Bring from whom we have received life, and we shall have to render account to Him some day.

"But how to make it easy, tolerable, bearable, happy if that can be?

"I said, we are not rich, and I add: we are not scholars; for lack of sufficient instruction and experience, we cannot devote ourselves to conversations either religious or political, philosophical, historical, literary, scientific, artistic, noble, elevated, varied, interesting, capable of captivating us a whole day. Well then, what are we to do?

"Sing, that is certainly easy.

"So we sang.

"After some passable songs, the men gave one of a most harsh and savage kind. . . . This singular production was sung with vigor, with abandon; I was moved, shocked, and I was not able to cover up my impression. 'You do not find our song pretty?' said one of the table companions.—'I find it detestable.'—'Should you be capable of making one like it?'—'I do not boast of being able to do so'—'And you do well.'

"There was the provocation of which I spoke. It was as a result of this incident of no importance by itself, that I wanted to make not songs of progress, but at least something incapable of embittering spirits and provoking disorders.

"And instruction! knowledge! and the rules of poetry! Those are the things one must have to compose, to write verse. True, and I had been taught nothing and I knew nothing. How should I then find out how to produce a song? No matter; let's start, let's try. The companions honored Solomon, whom they called their founder, their father; then let's sing about Solomon; that cannot offend any one; and later if I succeed, if I gain influence, I shall sing not to please, but to teach, to moralize; I shall progress. Courage! Daring! without which the best faculties are extinguished and one does nothing useful in the world.

"In the evening after my day's work, in the room which I shared with Vivarais-la-Bonne-Conduite. . . . I made my first attempt, which I called: *Hymn to Solomon.* Was it good? Was I satisfied with it? Certainly not.

"I owned the chief tragedies of Voltaire and all those of Racine. In reading these dramas, I felt the cadence, and the harmony, I felt joy; but nevertheless I did not understand the construction, the strict measure, the secret of the verse. I was in that like all readers

who have been taught nothing. So my verses had only rhyme and no measure; they were prose, rhymed lines, and even the rhymes were not always well interwoven. It was in vain that I sang them while composing those poor couplets. I felt the defects and did not understand how to remedy them.

". . . But in the end, by continuing to read my cherished authors, I discovered the mechanism of the verse and then I was enraptured, and then I touched mine over."

It is true that he improved in his second attempt, *Combat de l'esprit,* a companion's conflict between love and duty when he is ordered by the society to leave the town and continue his journey. But Perdiguier's songs always had appeal rather for the charm of the sentiment or the elevation of the ideal than for poetical expression. It is perhaps a pity that he was so filled with a moral purpose in his song-making. But it is more important that he was sung by the brothers all over France, and above all that he perceived the real place of the song as a form of expression for the workers, and the fact that its subject matter must come from their lives. It was anything but a new idea. Hans Sachs, to go no further back, had been a complete expression of it. In Perdiguier's own time Béranger was realizing the same thing and actually making songs of greater merit. Only a little later another worker, Pierre Dupont, was to attain what was the highest and fullest workers' expression in France in this song form. But Perdiguier out of his independent discovery gave a most direct and complete expression of it. Through his whole autobiography scene after scene shows how much a part of workmen's lives the song was. In the shop, at fêtes, at important ceremonies, it was always to be heard. Its use on the occasion of his election as first companion at Lyons was characteristic. The retiring companion sang a very old song and Perdiguier answered with one which he had composed, promising to serve the men well, and ending according to the ancient usage with his name:

Les couplets sont du nouveau dignitaire
D'Avignonnais surnommé la Vertu
Qui vous a dit, vous l'avez entendu,
Qu'il veut toujours vous chérir et vous plaire.[1]

[1] **These couplets are by the new officer
Of Avignon, surnamed Virtue
Who has said to you, you have heard him,
That he will always cherish and please you.**

This interest of his in the song was destined to play its part later in his efforts to bring the societies into line with the new movement of the working class.

It was inevitable that he should be drawn back to Paris where great forces were gathering. During 1829 and 1830 he was there at work all day on his trade and on his studies at night, during meal hours and holidays. For a short time after the Revolution of 1830, when Paris was in a misery of unemployment, he found work at Nogent, a small town not far away, where he had more leisure than before in which to teach other workmen carpentry and design, to read and to make songs for the companions. In 1833 he settled in Paris permanently. Of this time he writes, "All that concerned national independence, liberty and fraternity made my heart beat." He believed that his rôle was not to be a great one, but he must do his utmost. During three years when he was ill most of the time, paying the penalty of the long drain on his energy for both work and study, he wrote song-books. At first he sent them to different groups of companions in the form of notebooks. Then he gathered them and some stories and articles on organizations and industries into a volume called *Le Livre du compagnonnage* skilfully aimed at the barbarities of the societies. It created a furor among the *devoirs* —in fact he was threatened with death for revealing their secrets —and in its second edition it called down the wrath of conservative literary critics, who urged that no worker should be trying to enter the field of literature. But it also brought him association with George Sand, who was so impressed with it that she sought out its author. He gave her the material for her next novel and she used him for the hero.

His life became increasingly active. When Gilland started his newspawer, *L'Atelier (The Workshop)*, in 1840, Perdiguier began his ten years of service as one of the editors of the ablest of all the workmen's journals published during the crucial years before and just after the Revolution. Through George Sand he was enabled to make a second journey through France, this time with the avowed aim of trying to win the societies to unity. In 1846 he wrote his *Biographie de l'auteur du Livre du Compagnonnage* which gives the history of his first volume, the history of *compagnonnage* and some description of his own troubles: sickness, accidents, misery, desertion of friends, attacks by the society, struggles

to keep a *garni* in the Faubourg St. Antoine, the workers' quarter of Paris. No persecutions could turn him from his efforts on behalf of the working class. In 1848 he was one of the few real workers elected to the new assembly, and he says with pardonable pride, "I was the only workman in all France who obtained a double election" (that is, an election in two departments—Vaucluse where he was born, and Paris where he was living). In 1849 he was reelected. It was a time of misery for the workers and Perdiguier gave wherever he saw need with no thought of his own future comfort. When the Revolution failed and the empire was reestablished, he went to prison, and then was sent into exile. During those sad years in Switzerland he wrote his *Mémoires*. There is infinite sadness in his disillusion, but no bitterness: "Reverses came; for four years now I have lived in a foreign land, far from my people, alone, isolated, often sick or without work, having need of support, of encouragement; ah well, in spite of well-off brothers, in spite of committees organized to spread manna, never a single service has been offered me. Oh brotherhood, there is your face . . ."

But in spite of this, what gaiety through these *Mémoires* written to take him back into France, and what amazing hope! He has hope even that machinery in the long run will prove good for the workers. He notes the evils claimed against it—destruction of individual work, the rich appropriating natural resources, the destruction of the independence of the worker, increased riches for the rich. But in view of the brutality of the old coach-drivers, especially their irresponsible drunkenness and the uncertainty of travel, he suggests that the old system was not ideal. A "magnificent railroad bridge" opens before him vast future glories, and he speaks of the railroad with delight, "those trains of cars without horses, drawn by a grand monster, snorting, whistling, howling, roaring, belching from his throat flame and smoke, leaping over space, devouring it . . . What an invention! what progress! what a prodigy!" If in all this development the workers have lost their heritage, let them recognize, he urged, that it is in part their own fault and that they can themselves win it back: "The toilers, failing each other, making war upon themselves and devouring themselves have lost their position, their liberty, their well-being. It is an evil. But a new sun will shine in the world; they will gain in light, in intelligence, in virtue, in wisdom, in activity, in right; and a renewed society will give

them back with interest what they have lost. Let them develop their reason, let them ceaselessly consult the voice of their conscience, let them be champions of brotherhood, let them love their neighbor, let them hope! justice will be done them one day." "There is nothing so great as noble hearts. If among men, some drape themselves in their riches, others with the titles of their fathers, for our part, let us clothe ourselves in our good actions and march head high but always without arrogance."

He had a way of injecting such moral comment and advice at every turn until one tires of it. But presently one forgets to be annoyed, for the writer was so entirely sincere and good tempered. Happily he escaped the unction of a man narrowly assured that he knows the way for his fellows. He quite simply loved the workers and though their revolution had failed, he believed in them. Though they had left him in misery too who had so often helped them, his life after his return to France was marked by his old devotion to them. For many a long year one might have visited his little shop in the old place and found there the latest journals and literature of the people; one would have found a delightful old man still carpentering, still teaching his class in design. He might have been accepted in the salons of the high and mighty, he might have had the cross of the Legion of Honor. But he preferred his little blue shop in the basement of a high house in the quarter of the people.

Here then was the new workman of France, proudly conscious of his skill and of belonging to the toilers. Though he was not of the factory workers, he went through the school of misery and became more and more determined to devote all his learning and all his power of expression to their problems. He showed workmen values far more life-giving than the new power of money. He taught them how to express their healthy desires for drama and gaiety in life. He set before them the ideal of a society in which they should have won their freedom by their own enlightened organization. No wonder a great writer should have chosen to write a novel glorifying this new figure or that many of the intellectuals should have hailed the dawn of a new civilization.

A similar factor was appearing in England, but how different from the French in expression and influence becomes clear if one turns to the *Life of Thomas Cooper,* written by himself. He too started out in life in a fair degree of comfort, for his father made enough

at his trade as dyer to provide a pleasant home in Leicester. But he died when Thomas was four. Mrs. Cooper had to move away to Gainsborough. Undaunted by the heavy physical train, she tried to continue her husband's trade. She could not earn as much as he, and the early happy surroundings were replaced by a humble "one chamber and one lower room" as her son wrote years afterward. "The last named was at once parlour, kitchen, and dye-house; two large coppers were set in one part of it; and my mother was at work amidst steam and sweat all the day long for half of the week, and on the other half she was as fully employed in 'framing', ironing, and finishing her work. Yet for me she had ever words of tenderness . . . In the midst of her heavy toil she could listen to my feeble repetitions of the fables, or spare a look, at my entreaty, for the figures I was drawing with chalk upon the hearthstone."

The shadow of poverty grew darker and darker over them. In order to eke out her earnings from dyeing, Mrs. Cooper also made paste-board boxes and trudged around to various villages trying to sell them. The child went with her, wearily dragging over the miles and often frightened, especially after one day when they met a chimney-sweep who accosted his mother and offered her two guineas for him. The grim look of the man, his angry threat as she refused, "You'll come to it sooner or later. You're a great fool not to profit by my offer now", terror lest he be dragged away from his mother, left in his mind horror that he did not get over for many a day—a sense of fierce, dark forces combining to crush them. The war years from 1811-1816 made matters worse: their dinner was often potatoes only; finally they had to move to a stable.

But his mother managed to keep him from being dragged into the vortex of factories or of the life of a chimney-sweep. He went to the Free School where he learned arithmetic, spelling and writing. His happiest hours were spent with books—Aesop's *Fables,* stories of highwaymen, *Pamela,* the ballad of *Chevy Chase, Pilgrim's Progress,* his "book of books". From 1816 to 1820 he earned his way in a private day-school by teaching the younger children for an hour every day. Here he knew boys of more culture than he and he borrowed their books—Plutarch, Histories of England, Greece, Rome, *Robinson Crusoe.* The old woman who kept the shop where he bought pencils and who ran a circulating library along with her shop, let him take anything he liked from her stock: *Arabian Nights,*

Shakespeare, Dryden, Ottway, innumerable romances of all types of excellence and trash. At thirteen he discovered Byron's *Childe Harold* and *Manfred*. "They seemed to create almost a new sense within me. I wanted more poetry to read from that time, but could get hold of none that thrilled through my nature like Byron's."

Meanwhile the Free Methodist who had much influence with his mother, got hold of him, and at fourteen he was persuaded to become a "ranter." For a time he was absorbed in "repenting of sin", "acting faith" that the Lamb would save him and trying to make himself believe that he was on "the way". But it seemed too illogical to suppose that his sins would be forgiven without his doing something more than have faith that Jesus would take them away; and besides the "ranters" read only the Bible and considered all other books contaminated by the Devil. This first religious phase ended in disgust for the boy who found a world of marvel in Byron and romances. He was not settled in his mind for many long years, however, and had to grow through a period of rationalism and vigorous teaching against Christianity and ministers of the gospel before he finally found a faith which satisfied him, and felt called to go and teach that to the people all up and down the land.

The chapters in his autobiography entirely devoted to his struggles show how far religious questioning was always an important part of his inner life. Nothing could be more unlike Agricol Perdiguier, whose only comment on religion was that he always questioned the narrowness of the church and outward piety, and who seems to have figured out at an early age "that it is our acts which count. God sees these and is just. All men are his children. I should love them as brothers . . . Democracy and human brotherhood were always a cult for me, a religion and not an affair of party." Contact with his fine old grandfather rather than with a hard, narrow Methodist minister of the old type probably accounted for much of this difference. It was characteristic too of much of the new movement of thought in France that its religion was this of human brotherhood and had little to do with religion in the old sense of the world, whereas in England many a young workman's life was darkened by bitterness against the Church of England because of its alliance with the rich, and by the emphasis on fear and sin, and the impossible intellectual narrowness of many of the evangelical preachers. Though it is true that the emotional people of the Chapels did much

to win attention for the wrongs of the poor and to cut through the desolating determinism of the current economic theory, their ranting about a "Father in Heaven" and that of the priests of the established church could be only hollow mockery to those left by the "Father" to starve in unbelievable wretchedness.

When he was fifteen, Cooper's schooling came to an end and he was apprenticed to a shoe-maker. It is evidence of one fundamental difference between him and Perdiguier that what he tells us about his first year of apprenticeship has little to do with shoe-making but dwells on the fact that his master taught him Burns "whose pathos took possession of my whole nature", rehearsed for him what he had heard of London actors and so made Cooper's reading of Shakespeare more intelligent. During the years when Perdiguier was travelling over France as a joiner, Cooper was sitting in a corner of his mother's house cobbling for a mere pittance with never a flicker of delight in the work nor any of those gay fêtes with brother workmen. It was one thing to be a carpenter and another to be a shoe-maker—even in France shoemakers were usually pitiful enough.

But Cooper's perseverence and courage in learning to know a vast world outside might make many a worker with his eight hour day thoughtful, and many an intellectual with his background of rich opportunity humble. On Sundays he spent his morning learning *Paradise Lost* and his afternoon reading some theological works like Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*. Week-day mornings he studied history or grammar until seven o'clock, the hour when he began work; he read a book or periodical while he breakfasted, and often while he ate dinner. He worked until eight or nine at night, and read or learned *Hamlet* or some modern poet until he "was compelled to go to bed from sheer exhaustion." "I was seldom later in bed than three or four in the morning; and when, in the coldness of winter, we could not afford to have a fire till my mother rose, I used to put a lamp on a stool, which I placed on a little round table, and standing before it, wrapped up in my mother's old red cloak, I read till seven, or studied a grammar or my Euclid, and frequently kept my feet moving to secure warmth, or to prevent myself from falling asleep . . . in the finer seasons of the year, I was invariably on the hills, or in the lanes or woods, or by the Trent by sunrise or before, and thus I often strolled several miles with my book in my hand . . ."

The range of his reading was astonishing. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Preliminary Discourse to Sales' translation of the Koran, Church History—and on all of this he made careful notes as he went along; Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and the Belles Lettres,* for, he says, "I was determined to acquire a thorough judgment of style and literary excellence"; various classics of English literature like Boswell's *Life of Johnson,* Landor's *Imaginary Conversations,* the later poetry of Byron, Scott, Washington Irving, the best contemporary literary reviews such as the Quarterly, Edinburgh Review, Blackwood's, and especially London Magazine which gave him essays by Lamb, Hazlitt and Dequincey, verses by Keats, Carlyle's *Life of Schiller.* He wanted especially to know different languages and started out to teach himself Latin. When he could read Caesar with little help from the dictionary he reached the supreme delight which every student knows. "I remember well my first triumphant feeling of this kind. I sat on Pingle Hill; it was about five in the morning, the sun shone brightly; and as I lifted my eyes from the classic page of the great conqueror of the Gauls and Helvetians, and they fell on the mouldering pile called the 'Old Hall'—part of which had been a stronghold of John of Gaunt, and of one of the barons in the reign of Stephen—I said to myself, 'I have made a greater conquest without the aid of a living teacher than the proudest warrior ever made—for I have conquered and entered into the possession of a new mind!' And *that* seems to me the truest expression when you find you can read a language you could not read before."

It was the same sort of thing that Perdiguier had felt when he sat on the grass of the public square and read Voltaire, or when he glimpsed the far world of the ancient Greeks. Both of them were willing to pay for this joy with their health. By 1827 Cooper was so worn out that he frequently swooned on the floor and finally he was ill for nine weeks. That ended his career as a shoemaker.

Next he tried setting up a school, starting with a hundred pupils, mostly children of the poor. But his attempts to convey to them his joy in Latin met with no response either from the children or their parents, who felt that Latin would be of no use, and with some bitterness at what he considered their stupidity, he gave up and moved to a school at Lincoln. Meanwhile he was passionately searching for religious salvation and "a spiritual faith that would

control his temper." He tried every form—the Independents' Chapel, the Episcopal Church, Methodist revivals. Finally he became a preacher himself going from village to village, but he met personal jealousies within the Methodist societies, was pursued with persecution and finally driven to withdraw. There followed years of teaching at the Mechanics' Institute formed in 1834 for young workingmen of Lincoln, and of studying at the same time, Greek, French, Italian, German and Mathematics, in the early mornings before he began his teaching. In the evenings he went to a choral society, for he loved music passionately. Then he began sending news to a Lincoln paper and decided to be a journalist.

At this period Cooper showed no understanding of the place of a workman as such in society. He was really himself craving an escape, and though he was teaching workmen, for he was filled with passion to illumine their dark lives, he was often remote from their problem as it was developing by 1827 when he gave up his trade, certainly by 1834. His ideal was the old classical one of personal excellence, high and noble in its day, but inadequate in the new world where workers to attain it must sacrifice their health and where even so the misery was often too great. Perdiguier was much nearer sound educational theory for workmen in general when he scored the French primary schools for time wasted on Latin. He was aware that the workers must know how to read, must understand history and science. But he searched for aspects of these branches of knowledge that would have special significance for them, for he understood that much of the intellectual baggage of middle class culture would have no meaning to them; their problem was one not of escape, but of winning economic and political justice, of making the world of the workingman itself contribute to that miracle of the discovery of a new mind which Cooper so well defined as the highest intellectual joy. His training from the outset by a father honoring workmanship and later in a self-conscious trade organization, gave him his vision while Cooper was passing a childhood where work was a dark penalty crushing out his mother's strength. His "tour of France" taught him while Cooper spent years of long days at a generally despised trade, barely earning enough for his own support, days shutting a sensitive, gifted nature into a prison of fatigue and loneliness, days which were a long battle between his will to learn and the coarse-

ness and cruelty of the surrounding world of toilers struggling desperately for mere existence, days which ended in that long nightmare of dangerous fever.

Cooper was unquestionably a poet—certainly a better literary artist than Perdiguier. But for a long time he was following a blind alley. Neither escape into the Methodist faith, nor saturation with liberal culture nor choral societies nor essays into middle class journalism could complete his life. He had still to try and fail.

The success of his notices written for the Lincoln paper went to his head, as he later admits with most winning candor. Some of his biting comments attracted attention; he enjoyed having prominent people think him clever and smooth him down for fear of his pen. Like many another aspiring writer, he was sure he could make his way in London. Full of resolution and confidence, he gave up his teaching and his local press work and set out. But the capital offered only the weariness of vain search for work until his high hopes were worn down and he was so poor that he had to sell all of his books and pawn his other possessions. He was finally glad to take an opportunity of work on the Leicester *Mercury* and so to return to his birthplace in Lincolnshire. It was to mark a turning-point for him, for one day in 1840 he was sent to cover a Chartist meeting.

He had been untouched by the struggle over the Great Reform Bill of 1832; he had no idea about "Chartists" and very little about industrial conditions generally. At this meeting he found the speakers urging ragged workers not to be deceived again by the middle class, and he resolved to find out what it all meant. How different it was from the Lincolnshire he had known as a child when he "mingled with the poor and saw a great deal of their suffering—yet witnessed not merely the respect usually subsisting between master and servant, but in many instances the strong attachment of the peasantry to the farmers, and of the farmers to their landlords. Here in Leicester in my office of reporter, I soon was witness to what seemed to me an appalling fact; the fierce and open opposition in public meetings of working men to employers, manifested in derisive cries, hissing and hooting, and shouts of scorn. The more I learned of the condition of the people, the more comprehensible this sad state of things seemed to me—but what was to be the remedy?"

Among the stockingers who made up most of the working population of Leicester, he found the misery which was resulting from the development of machine industry and the concentration of tools in the hands of a few. One man owned the frames on which the men worked; he rented them to a middle man who in turn let them out to the workers and paid them a small pittance for the stockings they made on them. If they had work, the men could make perhaps 4s 6d a week; but work was extremely irregular, the masters would charge a full week's rent for the frames even if they had only a half week's work to give out, and the resulting condition among the people was one of unbelievable misery.

Cooper began to write articles on these conditions for a Chartist paper, articles which soon lost him his place on the Leicester *Mercury*. He was then asked to take over a Chartist paper, *The Midland Counties Illuminator,* and from this time his energies as a writer and speaker and organizer were devoted to the movement of the workers to gain political power. "What is the acquirement of languages," he says, "what is the obtaining of all knowledge . . . compared to the real honor, whatever seeming disgrace it may bring, of struggling to win the social and political rights of millions?"

Once he had seen the issue, he was tireless and unflinching in his devotion. He took over the *Illuminator* and struggled valiantly to keep it going in the face of Whig interference with his printer. He set up a shop where he sold the Chartist *Northern Star* and various papers and pamphlets, and where the working men had a regular meeting place. He helped in the election campaigns of the workers. As a result he was forced to seek a new place for his shop. Here he sold bread and had two coffee-rooms for the workmen—often losing much money by giving them credit in times of distress. On Sundays he addressed the people, and held an adult school for men and boys. But this the misery of the men forced him to abandon. With increasing starvation everywhere, they burst out to him, "What the hell do we care about reading when we have naught to eat?" and his shop became the witness of daily tragedies of misery. His own Sunday addresses increased in bitterness. As the movement toward a general strike grew in 1842 he was implicated in the riots of the Staffordshire men of the potteries although he had urged them against murder; at the Manchester Conference he voted for the

general strike; he was arrested and spent the years 1843-1845 in jail. They were not useless years, for he came out with *Wise Saws* written, a romance, and *Purgatory of Suicides.*

Then for some years he was lecturing and writing in London. Though he joined the People's International League, started by Mazzini, who was in London and who believed in violence, for Italy at least, he himself had come to believe more and more that violence was futile and he determinedly kept out of the Chartists' riots of 1848. He devoted himself to journalism and to lectures for working men on history, politics, philosophy and literature. In 1848 he was running *The Plain Speaker,* a penny periodical devoted to radical politics and general instruction; in 1850 he published a paper for workers called *Cooper's Journal* in which their problems were discussed, their verse printed, and comments made on contemporary literature and philosophy of interest to them. From 1856 he resumed his early life as a preacher and wore himself out lecturing to workers all up and down the industrial sections of England.

This last phase of his thought was in large part a result of his intercourse with Charles Kingsley, which had begun in June of 1848. Cooper gave Kingsley the story of Chartism and of his own struggles and deeply impressed him with the courage and intelligence of workingmen. Kingsley on the other hand turned Cooper back to Christianity. It was the give and take of men from two groups that was becoming so influential in the developments of the century.

It is impressive that out of the misery of England of the early century should come a personality of such distinction as Cooper's to speak for the workers. The autobiography revealing him is absorbing reading on that account alone. But his development was so much a part of the larger social movement of his time that his book is equally rich in pictures of the industrial conditions and of the workers' struggles toward freedom. There is no volume which would give a modern worker a clearer picture of the changes brought by the introduction of machinery and of the causes of riots, of the gathering of the workers into class conscious groups to win their political rights. How the fierce men of the potteries driven almost mad by their wrongs burst out into wild orgies of burning property; how the workers began to plan for a general strike; how they formed a society which should present to Parliament a bill of

their miseries and demand six parliamentary reforms; the struggles within different groups, personalities of well-known leaders of the men, the tendency of strong thinkers among them to move away from belief in violence to a strong pacifism, all these make Cooper's *Life Written by Himself* a most valuable picture of the years of growing industrial warfare as they appeared to the workers. The clarity of outline, the restraint, the dramatic power of these passages, make much of the literary merit.

The two volumes of stories *Wise Saws and Modern Instances,* written in prison and published in 1845, gave the readers of the time much of this same material. For us today they are a useful supplement to the *Life Written by Himself* but their over-obvious moral intent palls. Conversations between workingmen and ministers of the gospel never fail to score complacent churchliness for doing nothing real about the miseries of England. Fragments of autobiography thinly disguised under other names give Cooper's own struggle to wide knowledge in spite of narrow Bible readers, his shock at the power of superstition and lies in the lives of ignorant workers, his despair in the midst of the thousands of starving whom he came to know as he went out into the world, his horror of the competition and avarice that ruled everywhere. The best parts are stories of the stockingers, mostly conversation among workingmen woven into a slight plot.

Here bitterness against a government which recruits workmen's sons for its army and then uses it against them, attacks on a God who would allow their misery, arguments on the pros and cons of violence are the inevitable accompaniments of the actual misery in their houses. "And the queer thing is that after all this misery, we may go to Hell if we lose our temper", comments John who is starving, whose wife has just fainted for lack of food and whose baby is wailing at its mother's dry breast. "These conversations are real", says the author. "Whoever enters Leicester, or any other of the populous starving hives of England, must expect to find the deepest subjects of theology and government and political economy taken up with a subtlety that would often puzzle a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. Whoever supposes the starving manufacturing masses know no more and can use no better language than the peasantry in the agricultural counties, will find himself egregiously

mistaken."[1] "The deceit of the Reform Bill, as it is usually termed by manufacturing operatives; the trickery of the Whigs; the corruption and tyranny of the Tories; the heartlessness of the manufacturers and 'the League'; and the right of every sane Englishman of one and twenty years of age to a vote in the election of those who have to govern him, were each and all broadly, and unshrinkingly and yet not intemperately asserted."[2]

Here too is a suggestion of the workers' increased dignity through their own associations. A group of them at a meeting on the corn-laws takes action. "The motion was put and carried, a committee and secretary and treasurer were chosen—and the men seemed to put off their dejection and grow energetic in their resolution to attempt their own deliverance from misery in the only way that they conceived it could ever be substantially affected; but their purpose came to the ears of the manufacturers on the following day, threats of loss of work were issued, and no association was established." Sometimes there is a note of hopelessness as one of the poor men, now in good fortune through the aid of a stray uncle and able to be one of the masters of frames, explains to the men that he is powerless to help them because he in turn is in the power of his manufacturer; he finally goes to India for there is no chance to live decently and fairly in England. But the stories generally end with the triumph of right. They are clear indications of the presence of a strong class feeling and of the reach of the downtrodden toward a position where they can be men, with the dignity and opportunities of men.

It was of an entirely new group of people that Cooper was writing, those who no longer owned the tools of their trade, who were being driven more and more by the development of machinery with its increasing division of processes, to become merely additional arms or legs of machines, tools themselves to be cast aside if they were worn out or if a cheaper factor appeared. In this he is typical of the workers who wrote in England during the first half century. In France they were still able to speak of their trades with the love of fine craftsmen. Perdiguier writes of a kind of aristocracy of workers and of an organization that was dying—for "compagnonnage" did not grow into the modern trade union, and Perdiguier

[1] Cooper, *Wise Saws*, vol. I, pp. 16-17, *Merrie England—No More.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 218, *Seth Thompson, the Stockinger.*

was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1848 and 1849 in spite of his being a "companion" rather than because of it. His autobiography never gives a picture of the misery which was turning the cities of northern France into a hell not unlike Leicester, though he suggests it constantly in his discussion of strikes. He wrote of the France where he, as a workingman, did have a chance to sit in the national legislature. In England, Cooper had to give up all thought of getting to Parliament because a poor man could be elected only by the help of rich backers, and Parliament could even refuse the workers a hearing. The tone of the two men was inevitably different.

But there is a fundamental similarity. With their eyes open to the faults and ignorances of the worker, Cooper and his group in England and the group in France believed that he was to play a new part in civilization. Perdiguier's hope was often more buoyant but Cooper's was not less real. "Ay, they are thinking," he writes in his *Purgatory of Suicides* as he passes weary days in prison:

> Ay, they are thinking, at the frame and loom;
> At bench, and forge, and in the bowelled mine;
> And when the scanty hour of rest is come,
> Again they read—to think, and to divine
> How it hath come to pass that Toil must pine
> While Sloth doth revel, how the scheme malign
> Of priests hath crushed them; and resolve doth bud
> To band, and to bring back the primal Brotherhood.

Here was the hope of the forties. It was the voice of the Chartists in England; it sounded through most of the workers' writing in France and found expression in the Revolution of February, 1848.

Enlightened workers, what might they not accomplish by banding together in a world where there were miracles like the new inventions to give men the wealth of the earth? Even Cooper with his dark experience pays his tribute to science and machinery, in his vision of the future at the end of *Purgatory of Suicides,*

> . . . Now behold the storm-tossed sea
> His pathway!—see his chariots o'er it wheeled
> More swiftly than o'er land, by energy
> Electric—which men deemed a mystery
> Or sign of wrath divine, till from the cloud
> A sage, with children's kite, and string, and key,
> Drew the winged essence and the truth foreshadowed
> Unwittingly, how, one day, men would tame the proud

All-scathing power, and dandle its huge strength
With childlike effort! Mountain, stream and mine
Their wealth afford him: Earth through all the length
And breadth and depth of her rotund confine,
Th' impalpable and vital chrystalline
Itself, are, each, his servitor! Of want
Men talk as of some ancient fable: pine
They cannot for the soil, exuberant
Rendered by art, of food is over-ministrant.

There are pictures of the misery of the stockingers again; of the tragedy of poor women enslaved by men's lust; there is fierce invective against the author of the new poor law and irony over the so-called "men of promise" in England. But the basis of the poem is this vast hope in the future. The spirits in Hades are seeking the meaning of life. They are in the depths of gloom when Menedaemus begins to speak:

It is not by unalterable law
That Evil's tyranny Man's spirit quelleth:
Brothers in us, in all, a might to awe
The moral curse o' th' universe indwelleth.

* * * * * *
* * * * * *

When selfishness, by Love and Truth dispelled
From human spirits, ceaseth to mislead
With falsest sense of interest—and 'tis held
A fiction foul that Nature hath decreed
Man only can be moved to generous deed
Of enterprize by personal reward;
When Brotherhood returns, and hearts do feed
On richest bliss, toiling in disregard
Of self, and viewing their toil's fruit by brethren shared;

When Strength and Health their happiness derive
From knowledge that the produce of their toil
Is shared by Feebleness and Age; when live
The men of Mind to kindle a heart-smile
Where'er they move,—disdaining to defile
Their names with titles, or their hands with gold,
And yearning every moment to beguile
Mankind to deeds of love and goodness bold,
Until the sun a world of mercy doth behold;
Think ye that then the curse of Evil's reign
Mankind shall know? Suffering will disappear;
For love and sympathy shall vanquish pain,

And gentlest pity shall the lorn heart cheer
* * * * * *
. . . . . 'Twill be a holy, gladsome scene—
Too holy for mad Pleasure to be there!—
A world of Love and Truth and Peace serene—
A world of brother-hearts, whose joys are evergreen!

Like Perdiguier, Cooper had no idea that this would all happen by itself in the easy course of events. He always urged the "toilful thought" which could alone attain truth and his own life was witness to his sincerity. As leaders both men counted rather in the field of education and of attempts to make moral ideas tell than as organizers of parties.

In literature they were both a part of a new expression of the working class. Cooper's *Purgatory of Suicides* hardly belongs to workman's literature, though parts of it give the author's vision of the new world and though certain passages do reflect the worker. He has tried to incorporate into a long effort of Spenserian verse his wide classical learning and his thoughts on the glory of man and his final destiny. Starting with the idea of "the creation of either a drama or an epic wherein the spirits of suicidal kings and other remarkable personages should be the interlocutors on some high theme or themes", he attained a poem of some power in ten books in which vast shadows of sages and heroes in a dim underworld warn humanity of pitfalls and preach the inevitability of "liberty and peace and brotherhood." The language is elaborate and academic and lacks the beauty of the simple prose of the *Life*. Carlyle was right when he wrote to Cooper that he should try prose: "I have looked into your Poem, and find indisputable traces of genius in it,—a dark Titanic energy struggling there, from which we hope there will be clearer daylight by-and-by! If I might presume to advise, I think I would recommend you to try your next work in *Prose,* and as a thing turning altogether on *Facts* not Fictions. . . . We have too horrible a Practical Chaos round us: out of which every man is called by the birth of him to make a bit of *Cosmos:* that seems to me the real Poem for a man,—especially at present. I always grudge to see any portion of a man's *musical talent* (which is the real intellect, the real vitality or life of him) expended in making mere *words* rhyme."

Carlyle meant something more here than the form. He was pushing the man of the people into his real field: The worker of all

people needed then to turn his mind to making order out of the chaos of industry; as a writer he was needed to express the hearts of the masses. It is explicable enough that he should want to try other fields; but the great genius has seen from the first that he must reveal the drama of his own working class. In France, Perdiguier needed no such advice, but there were worker poets who did, and it come over and over again from the writers of the main current of literature. Carlyle is one of the most important of such writers in England.

In 1843 he had himself published the first great English book of Democracy, *Past and Present,* in which he had thrown down the gauntlet to money worship and a public policy based on the arithmetic of wealth; he had stripped away the complacent phrases that were covering unbelievable miseries among the masses. With lightnings and clarion calls he had championed the cause of order—a deep moral order which he found non-existent in the England of his day. It was this volume that he sent to Cooper along with his letter on the *Purgatory of Suicides.* "I will request you farther to accept this Book of mine, and to appropriate what you can of it. 'Life is a serious thing', as Schiller says, and as you yourself practically know! These are the words of a serious man about it; they will not altogether be without meaning for you . . ."

The incident is symbolic. The main line of literature was taking the direction of social reform. In England Carlyle was the prophet; and Dickens was the popularizer of the problems of the lower classes. Disraeli's *Sybil* gave a picture of the class conscious movement called Chartism, to which Cooper belonged. Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley* showed the conflicts resulting from the new machinery. Later Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton* and *North and South* gave the miseries of the working population of Manchester and the attitude of the new manufacturer. Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* made a hero of the worker poet with Cooper as the model. In France a similar movement was growing. Saint Simon and Fourier were the prophets, with various schools and interpreters who followed after them, like Lamennais, Leroux, Louis Blanc, Cabet. The historian Michelet was writing of the destiny of the plain people. Poets like Lamartine were turning to the problems of misery of the working-class. George Sand wrote novel after novel glorifying the man of the people. She knew many of them well and constantly helped

them with advice, money, publicity, understanding. Hugo was swept into the gathering current and his poetry became more and more the expression of social needs; his *Les Misérables* is the great novel of the central problem of the thirties and forties.

When the artists were faced with the first results of the industrial revolution, the ego-centric passion of the romantic gave way to passion for social justice that should resolve the strife between two new classes—the rich and the poor. On the other hand, the establishment of schools and the spread of cheap periodicals meant that the workers could read and the world of literature was opened to them. Their miseries were pushing them into more and more need of expression. Their increased numbers gathered into large groups in shop and city,—the first consolidation of tool-less men with no hope of rising,—and the spread of ideas about the "rights of man" led them to more and more assertion of themselves as a significant factor in society. Men were rising from their midst not to be drawn off into pleasant activities of another class, but to remain workmen and to speak for them. These men and the intellectuals met. Both social organization and literature were changed by the impact.

CHAPTER II

"POVERTY! IT IS SLAVERY."[1]

The problem of poverty was certainly not new. But in the early nineteenth century the main issue came to be definitely a conflict between the rich and the poor. Disraeli's *Sybil* carried the sub-title *The Two Nations,* which meant the poor on one side struggling against the rich and powerful on the other. It was an indication of a new state of mind in a country where the industrial revolution was far advanced, and the almost magical increase in the national wealth accompanied by the misery of the masses. A similar situation was appearing in France as a result of the Great Revolution of 1789-1793 and the rapid march of machnery.

Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, France had been a country of solidarity. The king was absolute; he was worshipped as an idol, the incarnation of the spirit of France. The nobles held their land from him, in return for service rendered to the state —at least theoretically. The masses of the people toiled on these lands, paid their dues to their feudal lords, and suffered untold miseries with patient resignation, miseries such as travellers said no English, Dutch or German people would bear.[2] As the king was the symbol of the material organization of the state, the Church was of the spiritual. Michelet[3] points out that it was a solidarity of death for the transmission of wealth was based on inherited privilege; and the entry into heaven was a question of grace given through the church to a man who, without any deed of his own, had inherited the original sin of Adam. In such a society there was no room for justice or for brotherhood because men were not even responsible individuals.

This solidarity the French Revolution swept away. The people at last roused out of their patient endurance, protested that the nobles had held their lands on a basis of service; that they should

[1] "La pauvreté, c'est l'esclavage", the refrain of a song of this title written by Lachambeaudie and printed in the *Almanach Phalansterien*, 1849.

[2] Michelet, Jules, *Histoire de la Révolution Française.* Introduction, p. 83.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol I, p. 40. Préface de 1847.

now give them up for this service no longer existed. The government was forced to declare the rights of man as an individual—equality before the laws, security, property and liberty,[1] to abolish feudal privileges and to confiscate and divide some of the lands of the nobles and the church. A large class of new property holders thus came into existence,[2] with interests to protect that made them unwilling to go further in changing the social order.

But plots of dispossessed nobles and untrustworthy monarchs led to increasing agitation for a republic. By 1791 it began to be apparent that the masses of the people had borne the brunt of the Revolution with very little reward. The food shortage of the next two years drove them to more and more dangerous restlessness. By 1793, in order to keep its power and make the machinery of society run at all, the government had to plan a constitution which should favor the poor. Further confiscation of nobles' property ensued; the rich were heavily taxed; severe legislation restricted their business for the benefit of the poor; the right to work was asserted and government workshops were set up.

It was a great moment for the poor—they glimpsed a state in which their right to live and to find happiness would be the central factor of national life. But the rich saw their new position threatened and they identified their interests with the anti-revolutionists. When the reaction triumphed, they could think of nothing but the horror of the Terror and of assuring their rights of private property. The Civil Code proclaimed property as a "sacred right of humanity which no one was to shake under any pretext". "Political and civil liberty", "free competition and tranquillity" were considered the inevitable assurance of the greatest possible happiness to citizens.

This was the end of the Revolution for the rich—individualism in place of the old solidarity of castes; vast new respect for property and the theory that it was in no way connected with the state or to be controlled by it. Yet some groups of people had seen that this was not the end. The lower classes had been led to believe that civil equality would mean disappearance of the inequalities of

[1] Faguet, Émile, *Intro. sur les Idées Maitresses de la Révolu.* p. 40. M. Faguet says that "liberty" meant "freedom of conscience" and control over one' own body; that it probably did not include the right to association such as would be involved in publishing a journal.

[2] Lichtenberger, M. André, *Le Socialisme et la Révolution Française passim.*

riches. They had heard promises that all men should be happy. Yet men were not all happy. They were bitter that the Revolution had been appropriated by the rich. The state had once confiscated property. It was not clear that it should not go farther. Belief that other social measures would have to come, grew as the difficulties increased during the time of Napoleon and his wars, and then after 1815 during the years of the restoration of the old monarchy. While the new rich were devoting their efforts to consolidating their power by getting control of the government, the poor were often listening to doctrines which preached their right to happiness and self-determination.

Meanwhile, the development of machinery made it more difficult to harmonize the two new groups. Up to 1764 the industrial life of Europe had moved on much as it had for centuries. Skilled hand workers wove cloth and built houses and provided for the generally limited needs of scattered populations. A peasant was likely to spend his winters weaving and his summers farming. An elaborate system of apprenticeship provided that the numbers of workmen in any given trade should not be too large. Villages and often even families were more or less self-sufficing units. But in 1764 the spinning jenny was invented and then in 1785 Watt's steam engine was used in England for spinning. Within seventy-five years the life of modern Europe was changed more profoundly than by any political revolution. The new machines turned out enormous quantities of products much more cheaply than before; more people could buy; and the result was a vast expansion of industry and trade. England[1] in 1771-1775 imported less than 5,000,000 pounds of raw cotton; in 1841 she imported 528,000,000. She exported hundreds of millions of yards of cotton cloth. A similar expansion occurred in the woollen trade.

But clearly this use of spinning and weaving machines, and of steam engines to drive them, meant that in order to make cloth, a man must invest large sums of money. Village peasants could no longer weave peacefully at home during slack farming seasons; weavers must be gathered into towns where the machines were, and moreover only a very few men could afford the original outlay for the new tools. Two phenomena therefore appeared; the growth of large cities and the development of a large population owning

[1] Engels, *Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844, passim.*

neither land nor the tools of their trade, nor having the chance ever to own them. England boasted more rich men than before, but the tendency was to gather wealth into a few hands. A new class, the modern proletariat, thus appeared. In England cities like Manchester, Lincoln and Leeds sprouted up. During these years the population increased 571 in the 1000.

A similar development was going on in other countries, though not so rapidly as in England. In France[1] from 1801 to 1836 the population increased 226 in the 1000. The large industrial centers were chiefly in the north of France, where cities like Lille and Rouen manufactured cloth and metal products; in Lyons, where silk was woven; in Alsace where Mülhausen in its cotton industry alone used 44,840 workers in 1827 and 91,000 in 1834. France did not use machinery much until after the fall of Napoleon. In 1815 in order for her to compete with England it became necessary for her to introduce weaving and spinning machines. The movement was slow, but from 1825 spinning jennies were used in all the cotton mills, silk was woven by machinery, and the metallurgical trades began to try it. But even by 1840 only a third of the population of France was industrial and not all of this was providing day labor for factories. The workers in Paris, for instance, were still mostly artisans with their shops at home. Nevertheless the phenomena accompanying the development in France were sufficiently crucial to make the French investigators study England to see whither they might expect industry to take them and to analyze their own difficulties with a view to finding some solution.

For curiously enough in these industrial countries, though the new class of rich men were insisting that the unfettered development of industry in their hands would produce the greatest welfare to the nation, though the government could point with pride to huge figures showing increased trade and increased riches in the nation as a whole, unbelievable misery for the masses of workers invariably accompanied the new movement.

As the use of machinery expanded, more and more workers were thrown out of their places. First the skilled artisans suffered; then a new device in a factory enabling one person to do what had hitherto taken ten would drive out the nine useless ones. Usually

[1] Buret, *De la Misère des Classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France;* also Levasseur, *Histoire des Classes ouvrières en France depuis 1789.*

there was no place for them to go, for it would be some time before the cycle of increased demand from increased production could bring them jobs elsewhere in industry. In England agriculture had no need of them. They could therefore either starve or emigrate. Often they gathered in violent bands and attacked the machines. Year after year riots, burnings of factories, destruction of new machines gave evidence of the misery of the people. But they could not stop the progress of invention nor had they analyzed a method by which it could be controlled and used more wisely. Manufacturers and men were whirled along in mad competition. A factory owner would be put out of business by another who got bigger machines or new ones requiring fewer hands. Then his men would suffer.

Everybody produced as much as he could as cheaply as he could, and sold as dearly as he could. Amounts of goods and prices were regulated by a blind and uncomprehended force called the "law of supply and demand". Cotton goods, for instance, were made until the market was flooded; then prices fell, production lessened and thousands of men were thrown out of work. Hours were as long as possible and wages as low as they could be and still command enough workers. This tended to be a figure just above starvation level, for workers competed fiercely with eath other owing to the great increase in population, the development of mechanical devices needing fewer attendants and requiring so little skill or strength that women and children could be used in place of men and of course at a lower figure.

Cooper's mother by desperate efforts managed to keep him free of chimney-sweeps and mill-owners until he was fifteen; Perdiguier in France worked all through his childhood for his father, but he was not sent away as an apprentice until he was sixteen. This was not possible for factory populations on the whole either in England or in France. They were fiercely glad of the pittance each child could bring in, and the manufacturers were eager for the cheap labor. The use of children became so extensive that even as early as 1817[1] Robert Owen was presenting petitions to the government on the need of looking after the health of the children; by 1833 opinion was strong enough to get a child labor bill passed. Before then children from five to fourteen were worked fourteen

[1] Engels, *op. cit.* p. 150. Quotation from Factory Inquiries Commission.

to sixteen hours exclusive of meals, they were flogged if they lagged on their jobs or fell asleep, and sometimes where there was a day and night shift, they were made to work thirty or forty hours at a stretch if one of the shifts was not complete.

The law of 1833 limited the hours of children from nine to thirteen years old to not more than nine a day, from fourteen to eighteen to not more than sixty-nine a week, and totally prohibited night work for those under eighteen. School for two hours daily was made compulsory. But most of the old evils remained, for factory inspection was inadequate: hours were in general reduced only to twelve or thirteen a day, and the children were too tired to learn anything in school. In France no action was taken to limit child labor until the law of 1841 forbade children under eight to work; but it was never effective, for no bill of enforcement accompanied it. An observer in Mülhausen[2] commented that it was a woeful spectacle to see these children many of them not more than seven, setting out to work before dawn, wretched, ragged, thin little creatures going barefoot in rain and mud, carrying in their hands the morsel of bread which was to be all their food until their return, often trudging miles to the mill and miles back again long after dark. These were the new workers undercutting the wages of the men.

In England the situation was complicated by the fact that the manufacturers encouraged immigration of the Irish who would undercut native workmen in the labor market, for they were willing to live in squalor far below anything possible for the English and would work for enough to buy a few potatoes. France did not have this problem, but wages were low enough, and between 1816 and 1840 they decreased as much as 25% according to one manufacturer. In 1832 when 760 francs a year were necessary for a family to avoid sheer misery, the average wage was for a man 2 francs a day, 1 franc for a woman, 45 centimes for a child from eight to twelve years old, 75 centimes for a child from 13 to 16; and wages always went down after a worker reached the age of thirty-five. Single men could support themselves if work was steady. Women could not, except at the cost of the greatest privation or by prostitution, which therefore came to be one of the most usual methods of

[2] Villermé, *Tableau de l'Etat physique et morale des Ouvriers*, vol. II, p. 87.

survivial, encouraged moreover by the prevalence of drunkenness and the fact that many Parisian brothels had agents in factories to get girls for them. Families could not be supported on this wage unless, says Villermé, the fairest French investigator of his time, "both the man and his wife worked the whole time, were never sick, had no vice and no other charge but two children".[1] If any of these conditions was lacking, the misery was frightful. In 1831 a spinner of Rouen found that 61% of his workers, supposing them to be continually employed in his cotton mill, did not gain the necessities of life; but actually they were often unemployed because of the cycle of production, overproduction and cessation of work until the supply had been taken up.

These industrial crises, occurring with increasing severity about every ten years, worked terrible hardships on the workers, who had rarely earned enough to save ahead for times of unemployment. The insecurity of their lives became more and more the fundamental fact about them, and that through no fault of their own. A man might in the shortest time be plunged from a fair degree of decency to starvation, without the least understanding of the causes. Thus unregulated competition both on the part of the manufacturers among themselves and of the workers was bringing a problem of misery on a scale never dreamed of before.

In England, Manchester was the characteristic example of the conditions of horror in which the factory workers lived; in France Lille and Rouen. Down in what was known as the "Old Town", away from any part where the rich might have occasion to go and therefore so separated from them that conditions were not even known, the Manchester operatives managed to drag out their days of half-starvation, of ill health, of resulting moral debasement. Crooked alleys through which only one person could pass at a time, covered passages, decaying buildings along a river full of debris and refuse and giving off a stench such that it was inconceivable how human beings could endure it. One-roomed huts often with no furniture in them; the filthy river the only source of water supply; lack of drainage so complete that the streets were thick in mud even in dry weather. Underground cellars into which water leaked, shut off from all light, housing 12% of the working popu-

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 14.

lation. And in any one of these caves and hovels, a dozen people huddled together.

What else could a workman do at the end of a fifteen hour day of monotonous toil, but go to the brightly lighted gin-shop on the corner? There was no pleasant, well-cooked supper awaiting his arrival at home, for his wife and daughters were probably also at the mill, and even if they had not been, there would have been no inviting food, for he could not afford to buy it. The poor ate rotten meat and decaying vegetables; their cocoa was adulterated with dirt. At times of depression their diet descended simply to potatoes, and when work stopped not even these were available. People were known to gnaw bones from refuse heaps or gather potato parings. Their clothing was equally wretched, for it was made of the cheapest cotton stuffs and was often in rags. It was a cold damp climate demanding warm materials; but workers could not afford them either for coverings at night or for garments by day. They constantly suffered from colds and from indigestion. Engels comments that this made them melancholy and bitter.

It was such conditions as these that Thomas Cooper knew and the Chartist poets of whom he was only one. No wonder there is darkness in them, and the urge to escape either by a violent overturn of the industrial order or by getting away from it into some dreamland of culture. No wonder Carlyle thundered his warnings, for Manchester was not the exception but the type of English manufacturing town by 1844.

Because industry had not developed so far in France, the proportion of people in this degree of wretchedness was not so large. Buret in 1840 in comparing the two countries remarked that "France was poor but England was miserable".[1] This was due to the fact that a large part of the population was agricultural and suffering from no such enclosure acts as those which drove the same people in England into poverty. Even in cities, the French government was trying to clear away the worst old quarters, and had done much in Paris by 1840. But in such towns as Rouen or Lille, the progress of industry and the increase of populations was too rapid for attempts at rebuilding to keep pace. They came to be bywords of misery. Even in the south, Lyons,[2] the center of silk-weaving,

[1] **Buret**, *op. cit.*, **vol. I, p. 237.**

[2] **Blanqui**, *Des Classes ouvrières en France pendant l'Année 1848*, **p. 123.**

housed thousands of silk-weavers in dark, tall houses perched on its steep hills and affording one-room dwellings which were used both as workrooms and as sleeping-rooms. Here apprentices slept along with weavers' daughters and, as in the northern and English industrial cities, immorality reached appalling proportions.

The diseases resulting from such conditions made a high rate of mortality among the people. They suffered almost universally from scrofula and rachitis resulting from bad food; vast numbers died of consumption; epidemics of typhus and scarlet-fever and cholera swept through cities. In 1832 George Sand wrote of her horror at the constant procession of death carts in Paris, and of the dull, fierce anger of the mob who did not understand the causes of it and who therefore burst out in violence against given people in power. Many of the worker poets wrote bitterly of the rich man indifferent to the plague sweeping down the people, and they usually meted out poetic justice by having it reach him too. They were right enough in their groping after expression of the unity of social life in cities. Still it was true that the death rate was much higher among the poorer classes than among the well-to-do. In Liverpool in 1840 the average expectation of life in the upper classes was thirty-five years, for business men twenty-two and for mill operatives fifteen. In France the death rate was slightly less.

Shop conditions supplemented home misery in increasing the people's susceptibility to disease and often in causing the disease. The length of the day was enough to wear them out of itself even if other conditions had been favorable. They had to spend in general fifteen to fifteen and a half hours at the mill, thirteen of actual work on monotonous tasks. Hand-weavers worked for fourteen to seventeen hours in a desperate effort to compete with machines. Perdiguier spoke of the carpenter's day always as beginning at five in the morning and ending at eight at night. Both he and Cooper broke down trying to combine study with such hours. In the light of modern investigations of fatigue with even a ten or an eight hour day, we can easily understand the general debility of the working population of the first half of the 19th century.

Safety appliances had not been devised then, accidents from unguarded machinery were frequent, and in the spinning industries especially industrial disease was almost sure to kill a worker if he stayed at his job long enough. Cotton workers especially suffered.

In the room where the cotton was cleaned, a fine dust filled the air and got into their mouths, noses, throats and even their lungs. It resulted in slow consumption especially devastating for the women. Nellie Higgins who is dying of it in Mrs. Gaskell's *North and South,* gives a terrible picture of the way it got round the windpipes. It is a picture which would be just as accurate of the French cotton-mills. In a few places in Alsace by 1840 improved machines were making less dust, but not in the rest of France. Moreover, the high temperature necessary in some other processes, followed by the shock of cold air when the workers went out, caused erysipelis, and serious chest troubles. Hand-weavers toiled in dark, damp cellars, for the theory was that otherwise the threads broke too easily. In Lyons weavers of epaulettes for the army were suspended in the air by a kind of belt that they might use both their feet and their hands, and this for fourteen hours a day. The reports of doctors showed women made unfit for child bearing, children crippled and undergrown—a race of people little likely to make a strong, healthy nation.

Starvation wages, industrial diseases, thirteen hours of work daily were not the end of the miseries of this new worker. He had become merely the arm or the leg or the hand of a machine. Agricol Perdiguier worked outrageous hours, but at least he carved beautiful church doors or fine stairways or chests of drawers. His problems were forever varying and his imagination could be devising new designs. But the new factory operative became a part of his machine, making the same gesture over and over again through those same long hours. His speed was determined by the speed of the machine; any individuality that he might have was a disadvantage for the very essense of machine production is sameness. He had no thought of next processes, of skilled adjustments. This monotony played a part at first little understood in the fatigue of the worker and in his susceptibility to disease. Its mental effect was in many cases dullness, sinking of all faculties except the one needed by the machine. It tended to produce a reaction of excessive craving for sensation: Drunkenness and sexual excesses resulted. The common term for the mill workers had come to be "factory hands". It was significant of their position. The old slaves had to have some care from their masters else they were no good for work. The new worker, the so-called free man of modern society, was

only a hand. His employer had interest in him only as such. If something happened to an individual "hand", there were plenty more as cheap as he. The first results then of the division of labor were to change men into things to be bought and sold and cast on the rubbish heap when worn out; to make them something nearer brutes because of the deadly monotony.

Lest the hands' labor should somehow escape ever so little, there were innumerable factory rules with fines for infringement. Every operative found speaking to another, singing or whistling might be fined sixpence. If he was more than ten minutes late, he found the doors shut until breakfast time and was fined threepence per loom that he attended. All broken shuttles, brushes, oil-cans, wheels, window-panes must be paid for by the weaver. In England no weaver could stop work without giving a week's notice, but the manufacturer might dismiss him for bad work or behavior at a moment's notice. In France during Napoleon's time the law of the *livrets*[1] had been passed according to which each worker had to keep a record book in which the employer inscribed the date of employment and of dismissal with the reason for it. The worker's debts to the employer were also listed there. As he rarely got enough pay to live on, he borrowed from the employer on future work; he also thought quite fallaciously that if he owed the employer money, he was less likely to be turned off in slack times. In times of prosperity the employer was usually easy on him for this debt, but in times of depression when there were more workers than jobs, he was severe, and the worker was often forced to work at a lower wage and his dismissal was refused. If he was allowed to go, the debt inscribed in his *livret* had indefinite precedence over every other claim and the new employer was required to take the amount out of his wage. Because this meant much bothersome formality for the new employer, the worker usually found it impossible to get a new job.

Even in the details of his personal living he was a slave. Often the manufacturer owned the house in which he lived and the rent was taken out of his wages, a disproportionate amount usually, much higher than a property owner could have gotten unless he had been able to force his workmen to live in his houses. In England the manufacturer also owned a store from which the workers bought

[1] Villermé, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 126-138.

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their supplies at prices far above the market price. It was claimed that these stores were for the convenience of the people and that they were not required to buy there. But if they went elsewhere, they soon lost their jobs in the mill. Disraeli's *Sybil* gives a terrible and exact picture of the working of the mystem, and the bitterness of the hatred which the workers felt toward the overseers whose business it was to screw them down and make high profits for the owners. France did not have this system. But in France as in England another personal slavery was general: If the mill owner took a fancy to an operative's wife or daughter, the man must let him take his pleasure without protest, as his right, else he would be sure to lose his place.

Yet the theory was that the "hand" was a free agent, that when he went to work, he deliberately chose to make a contract under the terms offered. The tragic fallacy of it is obvious. In the world of machine industry, where skill is not demanded and where there are always more workers than jobs, where the worker has nothing to sell but his time and must therefore sell at once though the employer can often wait, he has no choice either of kind of work or of terms. Moreover the Wage Fund Theory asserted that capital set aside a certain fixed fund for wages beyond which it could not go. The worker could take what was offered him on the manufacturer's own terms or he could starve in idleness. If he chose to starve, the manufacturer would have no need to compromise, for he could get plenty of others who would not be so difficult. Yet in England the factory reports showed that again and again in law cases where the inhuman brutality of the employer was proved, the decision was given against the worker on the ground that he was free to make a contract. Before the law he was at a further disadvantage because for all the boasted equality, the rich man was considered innocent until proved guilty and the worker was considered guilty unless proved innocent.

Clearly this new organization of industry was tending to emphasize the distinction between two classes: Those who owned the machines, who could make large fortunes, who lived in ease, who controlled the state, whose main interest was to make money, and the many who could not own the tools, who could not in any large numbers look to rising to ownership of them, who were therefore practically the slaves of the smaller class in control of work, and

who lived in wretchedness and insecurity. They spoke a different language; they had entirely different sets of experiences. Their interests were not only different but often opposed.

Up to 1830 in France and 1832 in England the struggle between these two classes was confused by there being two issues. The old aristocracy still controlled the land and the political power in England. In France under the monarchy of the restoration from 1815 to 1830 they were still planning for the return of absolutism, and they did succeed in getting millions of francs as compensation for the lands which the revolutionary government had taken from them. The new industrials and merchants therefore in both countries were seeking to gain power, and stirred the working classes to help them. The triumph of the middle class came with the Great Reform Bill of 1832 which gave the vote to property owners paying £10 taxes, revised election districts, replaced rotten boroughs by the large new industrial cities and took away the vote from a small fraction of people who enjoyed it hereditarily.

The influence of the aristocracy declined from this point, and Parliament devoted itself more and more to the interests of the rich middle class. To break down bonds between classes that might threaten the new power, the new poor law of 1834 was passed. Agitation from 1838 to 1846 for repeal of the Corn Law was the effort of the middle class to free themselves from governmental restriction. Still ready to use the workers to help, they revived the idea of the general strike in 1842 in order to down the Tory government. They even preached violence to the workers, but characteristically withdrew to the haven of law and order as soon as business picked up in the summer. To be sure their appeal to the working class had some justification. When the economic crisis of 1846 and the threatened famine forced Parliament to repeal the Corn Laws, the relief of misery was felt at once. But the betrayal of 1842 showed the Chartists that the workmen could expect no more than in 1832. They understood that the effect of repeal would be mainly to destroy the aristocracy. The rich and the poor were now definitely separated in England. The numbers of the poor tended to be increased by the descent of the little tradesmen and independent workmen who were being shoved out of business by large enterprises.

In France the power of the aristocracy was really ended with

the Great Revolution. No large land-owning class oppressed the agricultural workers, for most of these themselves owned land after the Revolution—a tiny portion for each to be sure and often scarcely enough to provide a poor living as a result of hard toil, but giving them self-respect and lifting them out of the degradation of misery of the pre-revolutionary peasant or of the contemporary English agricultural worker. Two thirds of the whole French population was agricultural in 1840. The life of Perdiguier's father was possible to many. But the aristocracy won favor at the court of King Charles X who came to the throne in 1820, and all vestiges of the constitutional government remaining from the Revolution gradually disappeared.

When a series of ordinances was passed by Charles in July 1830 establishing censorship of the press, increasing the property qualification for the vote and confining the power to propose laws to the king, a wave of anger swept over the country. The journalists protested; the republicans, still treasuring the hopes of the old days, started an insurrection with the workers[1] helping and aimed to set up a republic. But the rich bankers and business men were able to put Louis Philippe on the throne, for the republicans were too small a faction to win. So, once more a revolution was appropriated by the middle class.

The property qualification for voting was lowered a little; the age limit was reduced from forty to thirty years; the Roman Catholic religion was separated from the state; the state ministers were henceforth responsible to the elected legislature. In France as in England the workers were no better off than before, and the next eighteen years were spent by the industrials in consolidating their power as in England.

The line up of the rich and the poor became clearer.[2] George Sand's novel *Le Péché de M. Antoine* shows admirably the new forces at work in society. M. Cardonnet is the manufacturer sure of his mission, driving ahead to control nature and the men under him, willing to be even generous to them if they are willing to stay under, and gradually controlling the state. And M. Antoine and the Marquis are relics of the old aristocracy—the one living poorly

[1] Levasseur, *Histoire des Classes ouvrières en France depuis 1789.* Vol. II, Book IV, Chap. I.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 890.

on the relics of his estate, the other dreaming new utopias. The third group is represented by the excellent carpenter Jean, the new class conscious worker, more enlightened than most to be sure but speaking out their miseries, their poverty, the unjust pursuit of them by a state in which they have no voice and the word of the employer is law. The children of both groups are idealists willing to sacrifice even love to the establishment of social justice, for they are brought into contact with the worker oppressed by the new system.

The period from 1830 to 1848 is marked by increasingly large associations of capital. To profit by the new demand for coal, to open up mines and extend railroads, large new stock companies were organized on every side. They fought each other for concessions, promised untold wealth in their prospectuses, sought influential men to back them with their names, offered advantageous terms often beyond what the enterprises really warranted. The public grabbed at the chances. Many societies, organized with no real thought of the enterprise itself but only of profit in the business transactions incident to the selling of stock on the exchange, failed, carrying with them thousands of innocent people. Scandals followed, great fluctuations of the market, and panic with all the frenzy of fortunes won in a moment and lost in the next, with disturbances to manufacturing and thousands thrown out of work. Even high officials of the government were dragged in, and at one time all France was shaken by a famous case of dishonesty of a high government official and stolen concessions not unlike the recent oil scandal in the United States.

Money came to be the ultimate social value of the time. It dominated the Chamber of Deputies and the gay salons of high society. Lust for it swept nations and individuals into a madness that could be aware of no other values. In France Balzac's *Comédie Humaine,* the most complete literary expression of the meaning of the time, has showed every class whirled into the vortex. Grandet is the miser of all times, but his calculations and his enterprises are conducted on the new scale and in the new terms. The daughters of Goriot are ashamed to show their rich old father, but not to bleed him of every cent until he must pawn his last treasures in order to give them a chance to make a splurge in the extravagant circles into which their ambitious marriages have taken them. Young Rastignac, coming up to Paris from the solid integrity of a country family,

feels himself drawn down as into a sea of mud, lies their tiny savings out of his mother and sisters, and prompted by Vautrin, the very incarnation of unscrupulousness in getting money, is even tempted to gain eight hundred thousand francs by countenancing a murder and marrying the daughter of the victim. He looks upon his love affair with Delphine as a possible chance for making a fortune through her husband, the Baron of Nucingen and a rich Alsatian banker. The banker himself moves through *La Maison Nucingen* and *Un Homme d'affaires,* the new man of power absorbed in money enterprises. Even writers were corrupted. Lucien in *Les Illusions perdus,* worn by poverty and self-denial, leaves the group of chosen spirits, writers and scientists, among whom he has lived, and for money plunges into journalism, there to lose his soul. George Sand's entire novel *Le Meunier d' Angibault* insists that all evil comes from riches and the mad pursuit of them, and the manager of the heroine's lands is ready to bargain away his daughter's happiness, his honor, anything for money.

The English Dickens visiting Paris in 1847 wrote with some horror of the fortunes made and lost overnight, of the mad extravagance of banquets and the contrasting poverty seen on the streets, and felt that some terrible crash was inevitable. His own novels were constant sermons against wealth in England, his rich men the villians *par excellence,* monsters in whom money killed all humanity—Dombey wasting the few precious years of his son's life in the pride of the power it gave and preaching to him that it alone was worth worshipping; the avaricious Jonas Chuzzlewit resorting to poison to rid himself of his father, the only obstacle between himself and wealth; Ralph Nickleby ready to sell the honor of his niece, and himself finally escaping the law by suicide; Gradgrind hard, dry, scornful with his desolating drive for facts and figures.

It is not surprising that manufacturers should have lost all realization of their men as human beings and should have counted them only as so many arithmetical units. The tendency of their whole environment carried them to value only profits; the growth of larger and larger units of industry removed them more and more from direct personal contact with their men and knowledge of them. In many cases, moreover, it was not their fault that they drove their men, for free competition made them often powerless and drove them to desperate straits themselves. Thomas Cooper's Seth Thomp-

son is one of stories of *Wise Saws and Modern Instances,* one of the ideal men who had had a little inheritance and been able to become a frame-owner, tries his best to give his stockingers a fair deal; but he is pushed to the wall by forces he cannot control. He calls the men together and explains to them that he cannot be a frame owner and treat them decently, and that he is going to sell out and emigrate. To be sure most of the employers who had risen from the ranks had no such scruples. Indeed they were generally the hardest masters of all. It seemed as though they must work out on other wretched mortals all the accumulated bitterness of their own years of slavery. Seth's stockingers regret his departure for, as they say, there are no other masters like him. In the French workers' poetry one of the most frequent themes is a reminder to their comrades that they should think of their brothers when they themselves become prosperous and powerful. But the man who had fought his way up, was very likely to say, "Look at me. I was like them. I have succeeded and grown rich. Let them do the same", and entirely fail to analyze the impossibility for the majority.

Most manufacturers, whatever their origin, were likely to rationalize their own position when confronted with misery by explaining that it was due to the force of things. There appeared to be enough truth in it at the time to make it plausible: They knew that they themselves were helpless before competition and forced to screw costs down and down. They believed that competition was a law of nature working as inevitably as the tides and to be controlled as little. With the rights of property established on an almost mystical basis they never questioned their right to make as much profit as they could. They were deaf to the economists who urged that most of the serious ills could be removed if they would combine and agree to certain conditions. They even persuaded themselves that it was good for the workers to be driven by misery to work harder. Many of them believed quite sincerely that they were acting most nobly in providing work by the expansion of enterprises; it was all for the good of society.

M. Cardonnet in George Sand's *Le Péché de M. Antoine* is this type of employer, and if the author seems to have overdrawn him in some respects, on the whole he was not an exception. He was not a bad man, but hard, practical, absorbed with figures and plans for building up a great enterprise, quick to decide and to act, daring

whether it was harnessing nature or facing the "abyss of credit", absorbed in a single minded pursuit of riches and above all so driven by lust for power that he could not bear to have any one near him expressing individuality, either his wife or his son or his workmen. He rationalizes it all to his own complete satisfaction, sure that he is the most logical and high-purposed of men: "What divine mystery are you seeking other than what is in human things?" he demands of his son, who is pleading for some idealism.

"We shall have gained the benefits of industry for a whole province. Are we not already on the way? Is work not the source and nourishment of work? Do we not give more men a chance to work here in one day than agriculture and the little barbarous industries that I am going to suppress used to occupy in a month? Aren't their wages increased? Are they not on the way to gain the spirit of order, providence, sobriety, all the virtues which they have lacked? Where are these virtues, the sole happiness of the poor, hidden? In absorbing work, in healthy fatigue, and in a proportionate wage. The good worker has family feeling, respect for property, submission to the laws, economy, the habit and the results of saving. It is idleness and all the bad reasoning that it engenders which destroys him. Occupy him, crush him with his task; he is robust, he will become more so; he will not dream any more of the overturn of society. He will bring order into his conduct, cleanliness into his house, he will bring there well-being and security. And if he becomes old and weak, whatever good will you may have to help him will no longer be necessary. He himself will have thought of the future; he will have no need of alms and protection like your friend Jappeloup, the vagabond; he will be really a free man. There is no other way to save the people!"

To be sure, Cardonnet has clearly perceived the drift of his time to large enterprises and urges with reason that it is a century of industry and everyone must work, one with his hands, one with his head; but when it comes to offering terms of work to men, he shows that he regards them only as so many necessary machines.[1] He says frankly to Jean, the carpenter, who suggests that he wants to build himself a house, " 'That is what I shall not allow. . . . You shall not have a house, you shall not own your tools, you shall sleep and eat, at my house, you shall use only my tools . . . .' "

[1] Compare Villermé, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 55 *seq.*

And Jean interrupts, "That's enough to make me see that I shall be your property and your slave. No thank you, Monsieur, there is nothing doing." The sequel is that as Jean is departing from the grounds, Cardonnet, who is the mayor, has him arrested for debts and vagabondage, with the avowed intention of bringing him to terms, for Jean is a skilled workman, and Cardonnet wants him at a time of emergency.

Galuchet, the mechanized clerk of M. Cardonnet, speaks of the workers and their wages in the same hard, inhuman fashion when he assures Emile that he need not worry about his fortune, for though his father is paying high wages now, that will soon cease: "Constant observed that the pay of the workmen was exorbitant, and that if it were not reduced by a half in two months, the funds engaged in the business would be insufficient. 'But that cannot trouble your father, he added; one pays the workman as one feeds his horse, in proportion to the amount of work one demands. When one wishes to double the work, one doubles the wage, as one doubles the oats. Then, when one is no longer so rushed, one lowers it and rations proportionately.'

" 'My father will not act so, said Emile; for horses perhaps, but not for men.'

" 'Do not say that, Monsieur, answered Galuchet; your father has a strong head; he will not act follies, be calm about that.' "

Jean, the author's spokesman for the method by which such an industrial gains his position and his power, outlines the process in a bitter picture of the way he imagines M. Cardonnet would plan: "When once I have ruined all the little industries which competed with me, I become a lord more powerful than your ancestors were before the Revolution, M. Antoine! I govern above the laws, and, while for the least pecadillo I have a poor devil locked up, I allow myself anything that pleases me or that is convenient. I take the property of everybody, daughters and wives into the bargain, if it is my taste, I am master of the business and the livelihood of a whole department. By my talent, I have made food a little cheaper; but when everything is in my hands, I raise the price at my pleasure and when I can do it without danger, I forestall and starve the people. And then, it is a slight matter to kill competition; I at once become master of money which is the key to all. I carry on banking under cover, on a small and a large scale; I give so many services

that I am the creditor of everybody, and everybody belongs to me. It is obvious that I am no longer loved, but the people see that I am to be feared, and the most powerful themselves cater to me, while the little men tremble and sigh around me. Nevertheless, as I have wit and knowledge, I play the great man from time to time. I save several families, I assist at some establishment of charity. It is a way of greasing the wheels of my fortune, which will but run the faster: for people come back to loving me a little. I no longer pass for good and foolish, but for just and great. From the prefect of the department to the curé of the village, and from the curé to the beggar, everyone is in the hollow of my hand; but all the country suffers and no one sees the cause. No other fortune shall have dried up the sources of ease, I shall have made the prices of necessities go up and prices of luxuries go down, just the opposite from what ought to be true. The merchant will find himself badly off and the consumer too. I shall find myself well off since through my riches, I shall be the only resource both of one group and the other. And it will finally be said: What is happening then? The little contractors are bankrupt and the small purchasers are short of ready cash. We do not have pretty houses and beautiful clothes before our eyes as in the past, and yet they are all cheaper, they say; but we no longer have a sou in our pockets. They have gotten us into a fever to make a show and we are eaten up with debts. Still it is not M. Cardonnet who has wanted all this, for he does good and without him we should all be lost. Let us hasten to serve M. Cardonnet; let him be mayor, prefect, deputy, minister, king, if it is possible and the country is saved!

"That, gentlemen, is how I should get myself carried on the backs of others if I were M. Cardonnet, and as I am sure M. Cardonnet counts on doing . . . There is but one hope which sustains me: it is that the river will be less stupid than people, that it will not let itself be bridled by beautiful mechanical devices that they are passing between its teeth, and that one of these mornings, it will give M. Cardonnet's factories a kick in the back that will disgust him with playing with it and will move him to go and take somewhere else his capital and its results."

The process is exact, but Jean probably credits the M. Cardonnets with more conscious bad intentions than they usually had. Still this was unquestionably the way it looked to the workers clever enough to analyze the whole cycle.

But if M. Cardonnet was absorbed only in making a stream obey his will, in building his business and figuring its profits, his son was torn by the problem of his father's workmen. Many middle class people from an early stage of the development of machines were determined to find some way to relieve the misery. During the early years of the century organized charity was the only obvious method. In France the government supported hospitals and poor-houses, and gave a certain amount of relief to be used by individuals in their own homes. As late as 1840 there were no very adequate reports showing the extent of poor relief in France, for it was administered on no such scale as in England, where there was a Commissioner of the Poor as important as a minister, and where the government had from an early date detailed reports.

In England each parish had been responsible for its poor ever since the law of 1601; but this meant such a burden and pauperism was increasing at so alarming a rate that by 1834 a new law became necessary. Not much can be said for it, because it often worked hardships that seemed almost worse than those of the old system. It forbade any doles to be used at home, any "outdoor relief" as it was called, and required that any one who received aid should live in the poor-house. The poor food, the long hours of hard work on rather futile tasks, the restrictions about visitors even if they were one's own family, the separation of families, for men and women were not allowed together, all made these institutions seem like prisons, and many a worker would starve rather than go there. Significantly they called them "Bastilles", choosing the symbol of the worst cruelties of the old regime in France and perhaps carrying ominous suggestions of an end not unlike the burning of the original Bastille and the freeing of the prisoners.

The whole system of charity was unsound in any case. As Buret later points out in analyzing it in both France and England, it was insufficient in its provision for the needs of people, it lessened such foresight as the poor might have and encouraged vice, it permitted manufacturers to lower wages to a point below what would otherwise be possible. Besides that, individual charity was uncertain and often uninformed. But it was a characteristic manifestation of the time, trailing along behind misery.

One of the appealing figures embodying the best of its spirit was that of the worker Jasmin, living poorly himself, walking from town

to town, reciting his own verse and gathering in some millions of francs all told for the relief of suffering. The will to help each other in time of need was a virtue found unfailingly among the poor. It was not exceptional to find cases like that in the factory of one M. Pauvel, maker of machines, who was forced to dismiss some of his workers because of lack of orders. He told them that according to the usual custom he would keep only those who had been there longest. But these men talked it over among themselves and then asked him to share the work and the wages with their comrades so that all should be working a part of each day. "None of us will have cake," they said, "but at least we shall have bread." But there were many of the middle class too who felt responsible though their thinking had not taken them far enough toward analysis of what really had to be done.

The middle class virtue of thrift was preached and savings banks were established, but these were no great help. Most of the factory population did not earn any surplus to put into them and, such small amounts as they could gather would help them little over long periods of unemployment or in old age. Critics noted the unfortunate psychological effect if they did save any amount that would count, for they wanted to leave work and become middlemen. The best relief society was the workman's mutual aid society into which each worker paid so much and from which he could draw a daily or weekly amount in time of sickness. These sometimes failed because of lack of proper knowledge about the proportion of sickness and letting in all ages on the same terms. They were sometimes looked upon with disfavor by the French state as the possible source of dangerous coalitions. On this account and because the French had less tendency to join clubs they were not so much developed in France as in England. Where they did succeed, however, economists noted that they helped to give the men habits of order and economy. But they did not go to the root of the matter any more than the savings bank did.

Some middle class reformers raised the cry that the moral degradation of the people was due to ignorance, and demanded education for them. In England the child labor bill of 1834 carried with it a school requirement of two hours daily for children under fourteen. The law was not enforced, and it would not have done much good if it had been, for the children who worked in factories longer than

we now consider healthful for grown men, would naturally be too tired to learn anything nor could they be much enlightened by the worn out operatives who were the teachers. The available schools had little to do with the needs of any children. They were mainly Sunday schools devoted to religion, a theological variety meaningless in its remoteness or terrifying in its emphasis on hell and damnation, a resignation-preaching kind that angered the people —its irony was so bitter. Again and again they asked for secular schools, but there were only a few day schools and these poor. Thomas Cooper went to one.

The French government made more effort to deal with the need. From 1833 compulsory primary school education[1] gave millions of children an opportunity to read, write and figure a little, mostly children of the cities, for the country children still did not go to school for the most part. Even the city children were likely to be drawn off into the factories before they learned much. The report of the government of 1838 showed only 3,000,000 in school in winter and about 1,800,000 in summer when there ought to have been 5,000,000. Fifty-six thousand communes still had no schools and there were not nearly enough trained teachers for the schools in existence. Perdiguier's account of his schooling showed the results. The suitability of the classical education which was the traditional form for French children, was more than doubtful. Some thoughtful people questioned the advisability of reading for these people any way until the whole economic organization could be so changed that they could get an education searching enough to take them beyond reading the stupid and obscene pamphlets devoured in great quantities in every working-man's community. But Perdiguier was sounder in urging that the reorganization of industry could not be brought about except by educated workers and he mapped out a plan of the sort of learning he thought they needed.

Children falling asleep over their studies because of fatigue after a factory day were sufficient indication that education alone could not solve the problem any more than organization for charitable relief. The principle that industry should operate on its own laws without interference from government began to be attacked. In England agitation for a ten-hour bill began along with that for the child labor law of 1831. It was carried on in Parliament in 1839.

[1] Villermé, *op. cit.*, vol. II, chap. VII.

In 1841 even a Tory government was compelled to turn its attention to Factory Acts. There were heroic figures like that of Lord Ashley fighting for government regulation that would make impossible such conditions as had been revealed in the Sadler Report of 1832. But a whole philosophy of government had to be broken down, a whole theory of orthodox political economy backed by able thinkers and asserting that unchangeable laws governed the movement of industry, and vast selfish interests which could usually be managed only by playing them off against each other.

In France some challenge of orthodox political economy had been made in 1819 by *New Principles of Political Economy or of Wealth in Its Relation to the Population* of Sismondi, a thinker partly Italian, partly French, partly Swiss, who had seen that the new system was making the rich richer and the poor poorer; who vaguely invoked the intervention of governments to regulate wealth. In 1835 the Academy of Political Science of Dijon set as its subject for a prize essay *The Amelioration of the Working Classes,* and Emile Bères's volume won it. He urged savings banks, loan banks, the protection of children, workers' syndicates, but his book had no wide influence. Buret's two volumes made more impression, written in 1840 for the Paris Academy of Moral and Political Science, under the significant title *The Misery of the Working Classes in England and in France, the Nature of the Misery, its Existence, its Effects, its Causes, and the Insufficiency of the Remedies That Have Been Applied to It Hitherto with an Indication of the Means Suitable for Freeing Societies.* This was the original inspiration of Engel's book of 1844 on the *Condition of the Working Classes in England.* In 1842 Chamborant in a book on poverty demanded that no factory be allowed to operate without government license and that those having bad conditions for their operatives should be refused a license.

From 1835 protests were made with increasing frequency in the Chamber. Lamartine repeatedly made speeches on misery and urged that the duty of the state was to govern for the wellbeing of the people. In 1840 Arago spoke on the miseries of the poor and the need of organization of labor. Petitions flooded in, demanding the organization of labor, fixing of wages, the expulsion of foreign workers, regulation of competition of one form of work with another—like that of the railroads with marine transport. Ledru-

Rollin circulated a petition in many shops and presented it to the Chamber, demanding inquiry into the lot of the workers and control of competition. But the protests were vain.

In general even fairly liberal economists did not believe that regulation was practicable. Many of them expressed sympathy with the poor and the need of some remedy, but believed that on the whole their condition was better with the advance of industry than it had been before. Above all they insisted on the necessity of liberty. Reybaud's *Études sur les réformateurs* was read by many more people than the works of those same reformers. It was first published in 1840 and continued to be popular even into the late fifties. In 1844 it was honored with the prize which is given in Paris to the work which has done the most good to society. Here Reybaud ridiculed all the utopian thinkers and attacked the notion of regulation of industry because "among the signs which characterize truly advanced civilizations, there is none more infallible than individual responsibility" and added with high sounding complacency that the social movement was toward removing poverty and enlightening intelligence. "In liberty must be found the remedies to pressing evils."

The business men themselves were perfectly content. After 1840 Guizot was the minister, and he was the very embodiment of their philosophy. Indeed he had led them to believe that now they had come into power, civilization had reached the pinnacle of its development. The old aristocracy was dead according to him; the mass of the people was too busy working to think of large affairs of state; the large industrials, therefore, were the ideal governing power, for they worked enough to have a realistic sense of what was needed, and yet not too much or too narrowly. So they delighted in their power and engaged themselves in protecting it from any interference in the best possible of worlds.

It is true that the *conseils des prud'hommes*[1] established by the law of 1803 did arbitrate many cases between 1830 and 1836, and they provided for representation of some of the workers, but only to a limited extent, for they were made up of chiefs of shops, managers, master workmen, all having interests rather with the manufacturers than with the workers. The fact that they existed indicated that France had not as deep seated a philosophy of non-

[1] Villermé, *op. cit.*, vol. II, chap. VI.

interference as England. The Chamber was willing to increase the budget for education, for relief, for day nurseries of which there were 14 in 1834 and 261 in 1837. But the big business men would not allow any discussion of income, rents, slavery or tariffs; Guizot refused to consider lifting the tax on salt, the reform of prisons or child labor, or the removal of the law of the *livrets*. On the contrary he gave new concessions and a new state loan to railroad companies. Both he and the business men seemed amazingly unaware of dangerous currents gathering in the depths of national life, though various insurrections warned of their existence. They were currents which could break the dams set up by the few, let them but gather headway enough, and that they were rapidly doing.

CHAPTER III

THE WORKINGMAN SEEKING AN OUTLET

"We must change the government, and make a revolution."

Slaves of machines for thirteen to fifteen hours a day, slaves of ill health and utter wretchedness of surroundings in their personal lives, helpless before the law, ignorant of the causes of their state, what outlet could there be for the many? Vice, with increasing misery and more vice on and on in a circle of brutalization. Violence against the machines and individual masters of them; violence even against a government allowing such wretchedness. Organization to lift themselves to better conditions; movements for increased political power which should bring government regulation of industry in the interest of the life of the worker and not merely in that of increasing riches; movements to bargain with the employers for better wages and hours and so to make contracts of the workers based on real choice, with pressure brought to bear by strikes; movements for education through schools and through the press. Self-expression in song and story.

The history of both France and England during the early stages of the industrial revolution shows all of these. Vice in both countries increased apace. Drunkenness was the worst curse, more in England than in France, to be sure, but too wide-spread in France and increasing. The frequency of gin-shops and cafés, and the cheapness of liquors gave ample opportunity. When the worker was out of money, he drank to forget his despair; when he had money, he was thoughtless, frantic from the monotony of his life, and cared only to enjoy the moment. There was little use, he thought, in not spending his money—he could not save enough to tide him over the next period of unemployment which would certainly descend on him without warning. The men who worked in large shops were more given to drunkenness than those in small, for they learned from each other, and their children learned from them. Brutalization of both parents and children resulted, and then followed crime and prostitution. Some employers improved these conditions by refusing to employ any worker seen drunk, but many refused to deal with the problem, on the ground that they were in

business to make money and not for philanthropy, and in fact that they could profit by other employers' refusals to hire such workers, for then they could get them at lower wages. Prostitution was even encouraged in the factories. Crime increased more rapidly in industrial cities than in other districts in both countries. Children became vagabonds wandering in the streets. The Paris gamin, clever and cynical, often appeared before the courts. Hugo has an unforgettable picture of one in *Les Misérables,* but there were fewer bands of them in France than in England.

It was the custom of many good people to go about preaching religion and moral reform to cure these evils. The irony of it was fully expressed by Cooper's stockingers.

Violence was another stage of workmen's search for outlet. Machine-smashings such as Charlotte Bronte describes in *Shirley* were frequent; or marchings against the aristocracy as in *Sybil.* Or there might be murders of individuals out of revenge as the workers agreed to murder the son of the rich manufacturer who was harshest to them in Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton.* Or a gathering of them might burn ricks and shops as in the pottery region which Cooper knew.

In France insurrections with bitter street fighting broke out in Paris and Lyons at various times—in 1832 as protest against the cholera, again in 1834 for five or six days when the Chamber voted the law forbidding associations, and in 1847 when there was a terrible industrial depression. The gentleness, patience and resignation of the Flemish people seemed to keep the workmen of Rouen and Lille from these outbreaks. But the high-spirited Parisians and the violent silk-weavers of Lyons were always like dynamite. In Lyons the men were also irritated by unusual irregularity of employment, for the market of a luxury like silk was more variable than for a necessity. It was such riots that George Sand described in *Horace* and Hugo in *Les Misérables.* Many a worker poet later celebrated his fellow-fighters who had fallen in them.

Such violence accomplished nothing. It only frightened the rich and led the government to take repressive measures. In France in the early thirties seven such laws were voted calling for prosecution of any offenses against the king and the Chamber, punishment of the press for its faults against the government, forbidding assemblies, public criers, associations. They were carried out ruthlessly with

the aid of troops if necessary and innumerable imprisonments of leaders.

The answer to such measures was the growth of workmen's organizations. Up to 1824 the English law had forbidden combinations, but the repeal of the Combination Acts then gave an opportunity for trades unions to be formed to protect the workman against the employer. Their lists of members were secret and often their meetings, for as soon as an employer found that a man belonged to one of them, he dismissed him. As unions grew, they taught the workers more and more that competition among themselves was one of the main causes for their misery; they gave the men dignity in providing them a way of working out a betterment of their own conditions and a place where they discussed large problems of industry with other workmen. Their method was to call a strike and then bargain with the employer not as helpless individuals, but as a strong enough group to threaten closing down his factory if he were unwilling to make concessions. Sometimes these strikes succeeded. Often they failed.

In Mrs. Gaskell's *North and South* Higgins is the leader in a strike against the manufacturer Thornton, and he represents the new sense of dignity and of responsibility among the union men, though often he is unintelligent, and overshoots his mark by his too fierce bitterness. The strike fails because the mill owners bring in Irish immigrants to break it. Horrible scenes follow in which the striking mill operatives attack the immigrants. In the end Thornton is one of the employers who learn that there must be some kind of organized cooperation between the men and the owners. Carson in *Mary Barton* never learns it, and the trade union moves behind the scenes, an ominous dark thing driven to act underground and to produce a futile murder instead of accomplishing the welfare of the members. In Charles Reade's *Put Yourself in His Place* the union members beat up other workers who refuse to join and who still compete with them. The literature of England was reflecting the early stages of trade organization. It was still too destructive; but the important principle of the workman's right to live and of his right to direct his own destiny was being established.

Built on the same principle and working by the method of conspiracy, the Chartist movement[1] aimed first of all to gain political

[1] Gammage, *History of the Chartist Movement, passim.*

power for the workers. Cooper was at one time a leader, and many another self-educated workingman like him—Gammage, Lovett, Holyoake. Chartism was an outgrowth of an earlier democratic movement and helped the liberals of the middle class in their efforts to get the Great Reform Bill of 1832. But as it became increasingly obvious that the new democracy was not enough to make the condition of the workmen better, the group came to be more and more a workers' party. In 1835 a committee of the General Workingmen's Association of London drew up what has ever since been known as the People's Charter, making six demands: universal suffrage for every man who was of age, sane and unconvicted of crime, annual Parliaments, payment of members of Parliament so that poor men could stand, voting by ballot to prevent bribery and intimidation, equal electoral districts, abolition of the nominal property qualification of £300 in land for candidates for Parliament.

The Charter aimed at destroying the monarchy and aristocracy. But the leaders were quite aware that they were engaged in more than a political movement. In 1838 when some 200,000 men were gathered in a mass meeting outside of Manchester, one of the speakers urged, "Chartism, my friends, is no political movement where the main point is your getting the ballot. Chartism is a knife and fork question: the Charter means a good house, good food and drink, prosperity and short working hours".[1] Vehement agitation followed. Hundreds of petitions were circulated. In 1839 three of the leaders called for an uprising to take place simultaneously in the North, in Yorkshire and in Wales, but the plan was betrayed and failed.

Meanwhile division threatened the movement from within. How far should Chartists support the efforts of the middle class liberals for repeal of the Corn Laws? Though they had at first been sympathetic, some of the leaders were convinced that free trade was not fundamental in their problem. "'Cheap bread' they cry, but they mean 'Low wages'! Do not listen to their cant and humbug. Stick to your Charter", cried an orator whom Cooper knew. Debates were bitter. The crisis of 1842 stirred the Manchester conference of the workmen to vote support of the Anti-Corn Law League. But when the business revival of the summer showed where the real interest of the middle class lay, and several firms lowered wages, the men

[1] Quoted by Engels, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

gathered to discuss wages not the Corn Laws. An uprising spread through the whole manufacturing district. Though it was quiet, the forces of order were alarmed. A crowd was fired on in Preston. Numerous Chartists were tried and sent to jail.

From this time Chartism was a class movement, differing from previous movements toward democracy by its social aim and divided no longer by flirting with the middle class, but by the issue of violence as a practical method and by the personalities of leaders. It never became powerful in England partly because of divisions within and partly because remedial measures and reviving business eased off workmen's misery. Although its representatives went up to Parliament to present a petition signed by vast numbers of workers, their reception was closed doors and challenge of the authenticity of the signatures. The government not only refused to hear them; it used every method it had at its disposal to destroy the movement; it broke up its mass meetings by armed forces, it convicted its leaders and put them into prison. When the French overturned their monarchy in 1848, a shudder of horror and fear went over England and even more repressive measures followed. But the existence of Chartism and the trade unions meant that in the country where industry was most developed, class consciousness was growing stronger among the workers.

The economic implications of this do not concern us here. Our point is that this class consciousness began to find expression in literature.

Once before during the middle twenties, under the influence of Richard Carlile, the workmen had burst into print in spite of paper taxes and the stamp act which made legally produced newspapers prohibitive in price. Issued from London and especially from Manchester, pamphlets, broad-sides and penny journals presented the wrongs of the laboring man. Many of these little pamphlets and booklets were written as texts for workingmen's reading groups; many lectures were reprinted for this purpose. The leaders still believed it possible for all workers to take on culture of more fortunate groups, "to work hard, read good things, have intelligent discussions with other men, workers or not, and keep their minds interested no matter what happened to their bodies."[1] But the journals

[1] Quoted from Anne G. B. Hart whose study of *Workingmen's Literature from Waterloo to the Great Reform Bill* is to appear shortly.

started under this impulse had almost all disappeared in 1832, indeed usually within a few months after their first issue. It was only with the growth of Chartism that a considerable body of workingmen's writings again appeared. The lowering of the stamp tax to one penny in 1836 made it increasingly easy for periodicals cheap enough for workingmen to buy. The editors left the cultural hopes of the earlier movement and became more and more insistent on the necessity of workers' developing a literature of their own because of the fundamental clash between classes. By 1850 one of the finest leaders of the Chartist group, Samuel Kydd, was writing in *Cooper's Journal,* "There is no harmony between the capitalists and the workmen; and it is foolish for good men to persuade themselves that there is any bond of unity between the rich employer and the poor workman, except the bond of iron necessity."[1] Cooper himself was writing in the same journal, "Men of the Future,—While diligently pursuing plans of study,—reading every book of value which lies within your reach, and thinking over it deeply, to the end that you may not be the mere slaves of other men's opinions, though you carefully gather all the information they can afford you, —it now becomes a matter of the highest necessity that you all join hands and heads to create a library of your own. Your own prose and your own poetry: you ought to be resolved to create these. I do not mean that every intellectual workingman should attempt to write a volume; though where there is genius, that will undoubtedly be done. It is the endeavor to enlarge the list of contributors to the cheap periodicals, and to create new ones, especially of a local character that I aim to arouse your resolution."[2] His journal did in point of fact cite with encouragement various such local attempts—*The Leicester Movement; or Voices from the Frame, and the Factory, the Field and the Rail; The Frame Work—Knitters' Advocate* of Nottingham; *The Snob* of Leeds "addressed to the Leeds Lioners and to all whom it may or ought to concern", a monthly paper given to waggery; *The Spirit of Freedom and Working Man's Vindicator,* starting as a weekly and then becoming a monthly. Cooper also cited various volumes of workers' verse.

The English operative was becoming conscious of himself as a human being with the dignity and right of a man. He at once

[1] *Cooper's Journal,* pp. 465-7.

[2] *Ibid.,* March 2, p. 129.

wanted to express himself in verse, story and argument. But the advanced stage of the use of machinery, the extent of the misery around him in comparison to that in France, which was the country next to England in industrial development, the failure of his movement of protest to win the attention of Parliament, the practical sense of the Englishman made his writing something quite different from the French in many respects. Yet the expression of the workers of the two nations was fundamentally similar in its assertion of the working-man as such.

In France the workers' organizations tending to parallel the movement of English Chartism in engaging in a political campaign to win industrial justice, joined with the republicans during the thirties for a fundamental change in the form of government, and during the forties with a new group who looked to a whole reorganization of society and who were called socialists. Efforts at purely trade organization with bargaining for wages and hours were often failures like that of the tailors of Nantes in 1832. *Compagnonnage* was a relic of an old system rather than one ready to prove effective in the days of increasing machine industry, however much a man like Perdiguier working from Paris might strive to reform it. It set up high standards of work and developed an artisan's pride in his place in society and so contributed to the general movement of thought of the time. But it was not concerned with the working class as a a whole and had no part as an organization in the revolution which was gathering headway. Perdiguier, living in Paris and writing for *L'Atelier* felt the thrill of the new challenge to liberty. But the main body of the society was in the south where the church was powerful and the general feeling went toward a restoration of the old French monarchy. The main groups to appeal to the workmen of the industrial cities were therefore the secret societies of the republicans.

As we have seen, these men had precipitated the Revolution of 1830 which the rich bankers and manufacturers had appropriated. The workers who had joined them, had been promised cheaper bread, equality, and extended suffrage. When they found that they had no more power in the government than before, they were angry. The intensity of their feeling is suggested in the bitterness of imagery in the lines of Savinien Lapointe, a shoemaker of Paris, and one of the new writers of the working class:

Par nous victorieuse, ingrate bourgeosie
Aux Barabbas des cours tu verses l'ambroisie,
Mais tes frères tombés à l'ombre de la croix
Boivent encore le fiel que but le Roi des rois.[1]

The date marks the real beginning of their class conscious activity.

The society which most successfully won them was the Society of the Rights of Man and of Citizens (Societé des droits de l'homme et du citoyen). In 1832 it published a manifesto claiming universal suffrage; the emancipation of the workers by a better division of labor, the right to association, public education; and the federation of Europe. Its political aim was evident. It also had a practical economic program: the union of the workers of the same grade, a committee to represent them with the employers, a federation of all of them into a central body and a central treasury for unemployment. But most of the societies were political rather than economic in their propaganda, aiming frankly for a republic. For a monarchy which was having troubles enough to establish itself and which was gambling with ministries to secure its power, they were frightening enough to cause repressive measures. In 1832 the intellectuals and workers were stirred by the famous trial of the fifteen leaders of the Society of the Friends of the People (Societé des amis du Peuple). In 1834 by its law against associations, the government caused the most bloody street fighting that France had known and put it down ruthlessly. From that moment the workmen believed more than ever that force was the only way they could gain their rights.

Though work was improving after 1834, the republican spirit grew. It was more and more driven underground. The miseries of the men made them more impatient; they flocked to the secret societies bringing an increasingly revolutionary spirit into them though the leaders were in the main opposed to hurrying too much and above all to the use of arms. Heine commented on the spirit, "Today I visited several shops in the Faubourg St. Morceau and discovered there what reading matter is being disseminated abong the factory workers, the strongest part of the poorer classes. There I found several new editions of old Robespierre, also of Marat, in parts sold

[1] "Victors by us, ungrateful bourgeoisie
To the Barabbas of courts you pour ambrosia,
But your brothers fallen in the shadow of the cross
Still drink the gall drunk by the King of kings."

for two sous, the *Historie de la Révolution* of Cabet, Cormine's poisonous libels, Baboeuf's teachings and the conspiracy of Buonarotti, writings which smell of blood; and I heard songs sung which seemed to have been written in Hell, the refrains of which bred the wildest excitement. In our gentle circles one can give no real idea of the demoniac tone which lingered in these songs; one must hear them with his own ears."

Parallel to the French secret societies, similar German societies grew in Paris, first among the students and intellectuals who were exiles from the German states because of the tyranny of their governments, and then more and more among German workmen.[1] Börne, Heine and various journalists formed the German Society for the Defense of Freedom of the Press modelled after a similar French organization led by Armand Carrel, Cavaignac and other republicans. When the law of 1834 against associations drove it underground, it was replaced by the Federation of Exiles, a secret society parallel to the Society of the Rights of Man and of Citizens, aiming to free Germany and put the rights of man into effect there. Its leader, Schuster, published two journals, in which he analyzed current industrial society, showing the increasing numbers of non-tool owning population and the increasing helplessness of little factories. His study of the French working men was teaching him the practical problems; his study of French thinkers like Sismondi and Saint Simon was convincing him of the connection between the political and the economic situation. He came to believe that the state owed a man a living and that some method must be worked out by which such a living should be possible.

Gradually the society tended to split into those wanting to emphasize economic reorganization and those believing that political change would be sufficient. In 1836 a group seceded and formed the Federation of the Just with Paris still as the center, and the tailor, Wilhelm Weitling,[2] as leader. Most of the other members were also artisans, like the watchmaker, Moll, who later became its leader in London, or the shoemaker, Bauer. Its philosophy claimed the right to existence on the condition that a man worked, the right to education and the right to vote. It insisted no less on the citizen's duties

[1] Andler, *Le Manifeste Communiste de K. Marx et F. Engels*, pp. 6-30.

[2] Buddensieg, *Die Kulture des deutschen Proletariates*, 1923, is a dissertation on Weitling.

—devotion to the fatherland, obedience to the general will and brotherhood toward each member of the nation. In 1838 Weitling was bidden by this society to write a manifesto, and this essay, *Humanity as It Is And as It Ought to Be,* was the first worker's analysis of the evils of present society and detailed plan for fundamental reorganization on a basis of uniting "the law of nature and the law of charity". It aims at equal distribution of work and enjoyment and tries to provide the machinery to guarantee to everyone the right of exercising and developing his intellectual and physical powers. There is to be suppression of individual property and the establishment of two orders, the order of the family to define the needs of all, and the order of production to determine the works of all. This manifesto of Weitling was the predecessor of the *Communist Manifesto* of Engels and Marx. The writer's sources were chiefly French: French thinkers—Baboeuf, Fourier and Cabet; French industry—for in Germany the factory system had not developed as yet, and though there were suffering poor like the weavers of Silesia, there was no factory population, nor had the issue between the rich and the poor become clear cut as in the two industrial nations.

Weitling's society was affiliated with a revolutionary French group, the Society of the Seasons, founded by the workmen, Barbès, and Auguste Blanqui in 1837. In 1839 the French society barricaded the Hotel de Ville and perished when the government broke its attack and put its leaders into prison. The German society was destroyed too, and the leaders exiled. Weitling went to Switzerland and from there directed the other groups—one in England and what was left of the one in Paris. He wrote several important works analyzing industrial evils and outlining a new world. They were the finest literary expression by a worker of the class-consciousness of the time and of the new utopian ideals which were giving so many of them hope.

Meanwhile, by 1840 the influence of the republicans of the French secret societies had given way among the workmen to that of the utopian socialists whose dreams of social reorganization came to be a new religion. Though the two most original thinkers, Saint Simon and Charles Fourier, were middle class men who appealed first to the middle class, their ideas reached the working class in the forties through the development of the Saint Simonian school and other radical thinkers.

Saint Simon was one of the most picturesque figures France ever produced, an adventurer in the American Revolutionary armies, a dreamer of vast enterprises like the Panama Canal, a writer who devoted his energies and his fortune to spreading his beliefs about the reorganization of society, who at one time despairing in his wretchedness of poverty, tried to commit suicide, and who finally died in 1824 believing himself to be a sort of new Messiah and considered so by his followers; a man who counted among his followers some of the first minds of his time—Augustin Thierry, the historian, and Auguste Comte in his early years; whose influence is clear in Carlyle and Mill in England, in Heine in Germany, in many of the writers of the thirties and forties in France. He was one of the first to see the significance of modern industry and science; he translated the belief in the perfectibility of man, which was the faith of the late eighteenth century, into a new Christianity which should make industrial society ameliorate the condition of the masses of the people.[1]

The golden age is not in the past but in the future, he said, and more than that it is not far distant. All that is necessary is that the industrial order be clearly conceived and that the most important industrials themselves understand how to use their abilities for the service of industry and all those who have a share in production. He began writing in 1802 when the results of the Great Revolution in destroying the privileges and powers of the non-productive classes —nobles, holders of land who only gathered in rents, army officers —had not yet fully developed and modern industry was hardly known except in England. His first challenge therefore was that France realize that she could lose 3000 of her princes of the blood without in the least upsetting her national life, but that if she lost as many industrials, artists and scholars, her whole life would stop. The problem then was to establish in place of the feudal military order of the past, a new industrial, peaceful order in which the capable men were the ones who held power, in which the interests of the majority should be considered rather than the interests of a few. From that time on he wrote paper after paper, discourses and volumes analyzing society, science, the place of banking, possible

[1] Saint Simon, *Catéchisme politique des Industriels; Vues sur la proprieté et la legislation; Lettres d'un Habitant de Genèva à ses Contemporains; Parabole politique; Nouveau Christianisme.*

organization to give control to men of genius—for he had no use for the mistakes of ignorance such as occurred in the Great Revolution when the untrained mob defeated its own ends. How shall we find "the means to make the scientific system, the system of public education, the religious system, the system of fine arts and the system of laws accord with the system of industry?" "To make the most able scholars, theologians, artists, lawyers, military men and rent-holders concur in the establishment of a social system the most advantageous to production and the most satisfying for those who produce?"

But it was not production in the sense that the English manufacturers were using it or that the French manufacturers would use it in a few years. It was not what they meant when they quoted Saint Simon as having some good ideas after all. It was at the antipodes from *laissez-faire* and the exaltation of profits and the wealth of nations. Saint Simon believed that England and France were the two nations nearest to the goal he set up, but he scored England for her malady of judging everything by wealth. The new Christianity set the right to life high above the right to property: Society must give happiness to the "class which is the most numerous and the most poor". It must be organized to do this. The old Christian command was that "all men should act as brothers to each other" but should render unto Caesar what is Caesar's. That is not enough now. In the progress of humanity, different ages need different formulae and different means suited to their special needs, and so the nineteenth century must complete the old Christian formula. It can no longer set its temporal organization outside the spiritual; it can no longer set up a heaven after death to be obtained by mysticism, asceticism, superstition. It must develop all of its institutions, industrial and governmental as well as spiritual, on the principle of brotherhood, and as the special problem of the time is poverty, it must turn to "working for the amelioration of the moral and physical existence of the poorest class; society must be organized in the way most suitable to make it attain this grand end."

This reorientation of life, he thought, could be accomplished by devotion of the highest human intelligence to planning of work. Work is far better than charity or than all the political and spiritual power so far organized to bring the fullest development of men. Now that the earth is so accurately known, it should be possible for

the scholars, artists and industrials to make a general plan for the development of its resources so that it would be most productive and most agreeable. Europe must be organized into a federation of peoples in order to make this possible.

We have been witnessing a vast new development of human capacities in the fine arts, in science, in industrial combinations, all of them pacific forces, all of them sacred. But if we are not to be destroyed, the science of morality must accompany them, for along with the development of the science of particular facts has come the egotism born of specialized interests. We must study how all men can be brought to remember brotherhood in all their relations in life however specialized. The religious sanctions of the past are no longer adequate. What is needed is analysis of society, and then a cult which will keep the feeling of brotherhood alive.

The great function of art is in beautifying this cult. The poets should make poetry to be recited in chorus at services to make all faithful to each other; musicians should enrich religious poetry with their harmonies; painters should decorate the walls of the new temples to inspire the people with terror and joy and hope. This cult is not the new religion; it is merely the inspiration to carry out the new religion—the reorganization of the social order.

The method must be entirely pacific. The new Christian may use only his intelligence to persuade men to his belief. He must bear violence without retaliation. His protection is the force of "morality and public opinion." There is danger that at first the poor may be inspired to act violently against the rich, but this must not happen. Therefore Saint Simon has made his first appeal to the rich that they may feel this doctrine not contrary to their interests, to the chiefs, artists, scientists that they may feel themselves workers, belonging to the people at the same time that they lead. Only so can the necessary leaders be found. It is these leaders then who are to bring the new day. Plan after plan is mapped out by Saint Simon, differing in detail as he developed, but all based on the principle that society should be controlled by an intellectual aristocracy. The people, he said, have no time to be sovereign; they can not know. Nor are capacities equal. There must be some organization, therefore, by which those who do know, hold the positions of power.

Happiness of the masses of the people rather than wealth; order rather than the anarchy of so-called liberty; organization, control,

association instead of the wilderness of competition; love, realization that one's own welfare was identified with that of the many instead of the "cash nexus" and the selfishness of specialization; work, suitable for human beings and developing their capacities instead of brutish toil and charity for most, and idleness and luxury for the few, all brought about by education, by persuasion, the goal not far distant—in general these were the tenets not only of Saint Simon but of the school of his followers and of other socialists of the first half century. They were justly called the utopians. There is no organized attack on property. It is to be kept, but regulated for the good of the whole.

At Saint Simon's death his followers[1] took up his doctrines and came to have wide influence in France and other countries. At first they followed the scientific and philosophical side of his beliefs; but under the influence of a religious impulse from Joseph de Maistre and of the sentiment exalted in Mme. de Stael's *Germany* and the theories of Lessing's *Education* which Eugene Rodrigues translated, they gradually emphasized the religious side more and more. In 1830-1831 the three leaders, Enfantin, Olinde Rodrigues and Bazard, published the *Exposition* of their beliefs emphasizing especially the law of human association—noting that men had tended to associate in ever larger and larger groups so that we might look now to the association of all humanity, reasserting education as the means and religion as the sanction: God is all. He manifests Himself in matter as well as spirit, and the three forms of human activity, science, industry and religion, are the expressions of His intelligence, force and beauty. The artist is to be the priest of this new religion. Love is its basis.

After the Revolution of 1830 the community formed by these men entered on a period of great activity. In Paris members of the Polytechnical Institute like Michel Chevalier joined, mystics like Edouard Charton and Buchez. Artists flocked to their meetings—Liszt, Heine, Sand, David. Workers came more and more—Pierre Vinçard first and under his influence many others. There were special Sunday meetings for them. A special order of workers was formed. Medical service was provided and several houses where they ate to-

[1] Weill, G., *École Saint Simonienne;* Reybaud, J., *Études sur les Reformateurs.*

gether, the expense being born by the rich members like Gustave d'Eichthal. The community sent missionaries all over France and even into England and Germany.

About 1831 they had won some attention from most intellectuals in Paris. They had taken over *The Globe,* a journal which had hitherto been the organ of the new romanticists, and in it they preached love of the people, an organization of a commune with a mayor to distribute tools and work, a teacher to present general philosophy and a priest to teach morals, an organization in which all should be property owners since all would have a definite function. The method was not universal suffrage such as the republicans sought, but the advent of a great man. Meanwhile there must be extended education of the people—practical not classical—public works, direct taxation and the abolition of inheritances. Above all the artist was urged to realize his function as priest in society. They praised Béranger for using the song in this way; they looked to Vigny and Hugo as their future prophets.

They had established themselves in a community under the dictatorship of Enfantin where they worked at gardening, masonry and domestic affairs, studied and discussed. They might be seen going about Paris in their long blue cloaks, and often a worker's poem might celebrate this garb, for it stood for sympathy with the miseries and the shortcomings of his class. But Enfantin lost his head with power and became obsessed with the notion of finding a mother for the society. The community was split over the issue of free love and was broken up by the state. From 1832 the great days of enthusiasm and group activity were over.

Individuals were scattered over France, often as workers in mills, often finding success in banking or in the establishment of railroads. Some of them published pamphlets describing the miseries of the working people. Buchez's paper, *L' Européen,* preached association and war against egotism both in industry and in contemporary art. Michel Chevalier, teaching economics at the Collége de France, kept insisting on the moral principle in industry and fought the notion that government regulation was nothing but a nuisance. In Paris meetings were still held, attended by more and more workers and fewer and fewer of the middle class. Pierre Vinçard, now the pastor, devoted himself to making the Sunday meetings with their Saint Simonian songs, take the place of wild orgies at the cafés, and

he established the paper, *La Ruche Populaire,* which came to be the main activity of the group. Here he printed much workers' poetry, most of which Olinde Rodrigues collected in his volume printed in 1841. Writers like Sand and Lamartine preached under the influence of this religion.

In the main the Saint Simonists looked very little to organization of workers to bring about the new day, or to the gradual development of it out of existing institutions. It was only comparatively late that Pierre Leroux and Jean Reynaud introduced the idea of working-men freeing themselves, of sovereignty of the people, of fundamental change in existing organizations like the family, the nation, property. The hope was mainly in a great genius who would lead the people, and the appeal was to individuals of the middle class to see these larger interests and voluntarily give up their wealth to join some community established to bring about the realization of the new religion.

This voluntary action was the motive on which Fourier[1], the other great French utopian, counted. He was a direct descendant of Rousseau in his belief in man's goodness and the importance of his finding satisfaction for his feelings. It was society as organized at present that ruined him. Once this should be understood and man's real needs faced, life could be so arranged that he would live happily, because harmoniously. Like Saint Simon, Fourier analyzed the productive and nonproductive forces in society, showed the uselessness of the soldier, the man who merely drew is income from rents, and the middle man in comparison to the producer whom he considered the one important force.

What a waste that the most incapable should be in power, that the minimum of results should be attained from the maximum of effort, he said. Let us organize a community in which man's passions will rule. Everybody will work, for only so can men satisfy their passions. But they must experiment with different kinds of work and find what they like. Then they will toil happily by attraction, the great principle in life. They will not be pursued by anxiety because the minimum of subsistence will be guaranteed to all. The surplus will belong to the whole society and will be divided in varying proportions among labor, capital and skill. Thus even man's

[1] Faguet, É., *Politiques et Moralistes du 19me Siècle;* Fourier, C., *Oeuvres choisies,* edit. par Charles Gide; *Théorie de l'Unité Universelle.*

passion to possess will be gratified yet all the bitterness of competition and the waste of middlemen and isolated households will be eliminated. The details of daily life will be carefully ordered and so men will find their liberty, for true liberty consists not of chaos but order. Such is the *phalanstère*. It is not necessary to wait until human nature is changed, for the life in the community will itself produce the change. The only essential is the will to be happy. If a few generous spirits would start such a community, others would soon see their happiness and follow their example.

With this dream Fourier went to Paris in 1825 to try to persuade some rich capitalists to adopt his scheme but with no success. However, in 1833 he did get such a community started in France, only to have it fail as all such affairs have failed. In 1840 a similar one was started by some American intellectuals at Brook Farm with similar results. In 1832 Fourier started a paper, *Phalanstère,* to preach his religion, and his books began to appear. In 1843 with his disciple, Victor Considérant, he was publishing a daily, the *Démocratie Pacifique,* which ran until the suppression of all such papers in 1850 and actually won a good deal of interest from workers. Like many other journals of the time, it published a yearly almanac with stories showing the blessings of the *phalanstères,* moral tales of workers' lives, and workers' verse. Fourier's exaltation of feeling was bound to make appeal to romantic writers. George Sand made a picture of an ideal *phalanstère* in *Horace* (1840). Her heroine, Gilberte in *Le Péché de M. Antoine* exclaims, "But are liberty and idleness the same thing? Jean loves work passionately and all his liberty consists in choosing that which pleases him; when he works to satisfy his taste and his natural inventiveness, he does it with the more ardor."

In England a similar socialism was appearing in Robert Owen—a successful cotton manufacturer who analyzed the evils of the industrial revolution as Saint Simon and Fourier had analyzed the unproductive forces left after the French Revolution. Like the French thinkers he based his system on the worth and dignity of labor. Like them he looked for reorganization from some benevolent autocrat.

He tried to work out a system of cooperation between men and manufacturer in his own factory at New Lanark. In 1825 a community based on his principles was started near Glascow and he

himself tried one in New Harmony in Indiana. But they failed too. He henceforth devoted himself to spreading his ideas and in 1835 started the Association of All Classes and All Nations which was to have a central body at Birmingham and to send missionaries over England to educate the people. Reason was to change society to accept the religion of charity and a system of united property under which all should produce for the good of all without the evils of competition. The method was to be education and the formation of "Communities of united interest". He gained considerable influence with the working class in England, and his influence was felt in France through Cabet, but gradually his efforts failed. By 1848 the only result was the cooperative movement which had been started. His beginnings were really taken up and carried on by the Christian socialists, Maurice and Kingsley, through the latter of whom they got into literature.

All of these men insisted on the moral principle in industry. Men first of all had the right to live, and society must be organized to make life possible. This was the great contribution of the new religion of the forties. This won the support of the intellectuals. Even Lamartine commented in 1845: "There are two schools of political economy, the one English and materialistic which treats men as inert quantities, which speaks in figures for fear that it let a feeling or an idea slip into its system. . . There is another school which was born in France in these last years from the sufferings of the proletarian, from the egotism of the manufacturers, the hardness of the capitalists, the agitation of the time, the memories of the Convention, the yearnings of philanthropy and expectant dreams of an entirely ideal era: it is that which prophesies to the masses the coming of the industrial Christ, and calls them to the religion of association. We do not belong either to one or the other of these schools. We believe that they are both false. But the one lacks soul and the other merely lacks moderation in its passion for good. We make the distinction between them that there is between cruelty and an illusion."

Belief in the gospel of ennobling work, in happiness as the natural state of man; in association, in the interdependence of human interests; in the possibility of a golden age and in the nearness of it, had men but the will—it was a magnificent challenge to the system of *laissez-faire* of rationalists with their arithmetic of society and

their acceptance of misery as inevitable. It was the basis of much of the new literature of the main current in France; it was the basis of most of the workers' writing. In England certain of its ideas were taken up by Carlyle, but literature there tended to keep to analysis of actual miseries and a call to definite reforms rather than to accept general theories. The difference between Mrs. Gaskell and George Sand is significant. Owen was not successful in a country moving by the slow road of remedial legislation to solid reforms. The communities attempted by the utopians were no more successful in France, but their ideas caught the imagination of the people, reinforced other forces at work in French society and swept an agitation for political reform into a social revolution.

They reached the working people in the '40's largely through Cabet, Louis Blanc and Lamennais. Cabet was by birth of the working class, for his father was a cooper of Dijon. He was brought up to become a magistrate. The families of workers were often likely to struggle to get their sons places in the government and the sons were too likely to become like Horace of Sand's novel, but Cabet kept his democratic sympathies. In 1834 he was sent as deputy to the Chamber by the democratic party. His newspaper *Le Populaire* always preached the people's interests until he was sent into exile by the government. Five years in England just at the time when the conspiracies of the Chartists were resulting in violences and failures, taught him to have no use for their method but to look to the more peaceful methods of Robert Owen's socialism. When he returned to France he preached a system not unlike Owen's in his new paper *Le Populaire de 1840,* in many simple publications which he produced for workingmen and especially in his *Voyage en Icarie* published in 1840 and going quickly into a second edition. It is a naive and often charming picture of beautiful cities and happy people where everybody worked and where the state regulated all industry and even much of the personal life of the citizens, for it cooked and regulated the food and even marriage. The problems of distribution of wealth were to be solved by rewarding people according to their needs, assumed to be equal. Like Owen the writer looked to a voluntary renunciation of riches and a pacific absorption of property to make the transition. He himself tried to establish such a community in Texas in 1847 but certain members of the group started first and by the time he got

there, he found that its beginnings had been destroyed by personal enmities. Meanwhile he was widely read by the workers of Paris.

Louis Blanc was even more influential. Indeed he brought utopian socialism directly into the political life of France. His system was like Cabet's in its insistence that industry should be so organized that each person should be rewarded equally; each should give according to capacity. But his method differed, for the shop was the center. There should be national workshops which should gradually make private enterprises go out of business. The state should hold all the public wealth and distribute both work and pay in a society where all worked. There should be tools for all and education for all. Thus competition was to be destroyed and the terrible contrasts in fortune which made the bitterness of the present. Universal suffrage would provide a government which would represent all. The whole plan was based on the theory of social solidarity, and its notion of the organization of industry had its roots in Fourierism.

Louis Blanc first stated these principles in *Organisation du Travail* published in 1840 in his paper *Revue de Progrès.* By 1845 it had reached the fourth edition so rapidly was it taken up by the workers. It gave a bitter picture of the misery of the poor resulting from the system of *laissez-faire.* Louis Blanc had himself known this misery at first hand in Paris in 1830 when family misfortunes had left him to struggle there just at a time of general unemployment. He at last became the tutor of the children of a rich manufacturer of Arras, and it was here that he saw mill conditions at first hand. All through 1834 he wrote articles on them in the Arras *Bon Sens,* and from that time devoted his efforts to spreading knowledge of the problems involved and trying to analyze remedies. In 1843 he became one of the editors of the *Réforme,* established to spread the idea of republicanism. In 1847 he published his *Histoire de Dix Ans.* The workmen were as captivated by his charm of personality as by his writings. They turned to him as their special representative in the crisis on 1848.

But the exponent of the new religion whose influence on all classes and indeed through all Europe was most immediate and potent was Lamennais.

Lamennais was a priest who had begun his career by fighting the Revolution, Napoleon and the Empire as anti-Christian. He had looked to the Restoration to restore the church, but he had been dis-

appointed. He had tried to stir the church to activity only to be summoned to Rome and reprimanded for his plain speaking and only to find in Rome such absorption in temporal interests that he began to realize that his dream of a living Christianity could come only through complete liberty. By 1832 he had been excommunicated. He was already far on the way to republicanism and henceforth he found his friends among the republicans. His fearless, fiery, prophetic nature made him a power whose influence reached all ranks of society. He preached his vision in a series of works beginning with his journal *L'Avenir* in 1830 which carried his device "God and Liberty" all over Europe and which followed the Saint Simonians so sympathetically that when he left the church they hoped to win him to join them. *Les Paroles d' un croyant* written especially for simple people and published in 1834, chanted his hope for their future and his faith in them. His defense of the Lyons insurrectionaries in the same year identified the social and the political question. *Le Livre du Peuple* insisted on the sovereignty of the people, challenged them to free themselves by association, urged morality as the basis of any reorganization of society. The essays of his journal *Le Monde* published in 1837 in Paris and afterward collected into the volume *Le Politique à l' usage du peuple,* defined slavery, the people, the bourgeoisie. In 1840 his *Esquisse d'une philosophie* with its essay *De l'Art et du beau* called the artist to be the priest of the new social order. The same year he was put into prison for a pamphlet attacking the government's interference with association for reform, and while there he wrote *Du Passé et de l'avenir du peuple* in which he again defended liberty as the supreme good and attacked the socialists on the ground that their systems would be as tyrannical and materialistic as the one they wished to displace.

His philosophy of society was based on faith in God: the sensible universe is an imperfect manifestation of an infinite and perfect pattern. Humanity is developing according to inevitable laws toward a more and more perfect expression of this Divine Idea by a threefold activity, industry, which gives man control over nature, art, which is his concrete embodiment of the truth, and science, which is abstract truth. Without the last two activities man would be no better than the brutes, for it is his intelligence which makes him able to perceive new needs and satisfy them. This complete de-

velopment toward perfection is what is meant by progress. But progress cannot go on while a part of humanity is enslaved. To-day's wage system is as much slavery as the old system of forcing the bodies of men, for the essence of slavery is destruction of personality. Society must be reorganized therefore to give people freedom to develop personally, materially and intellectually, to have knowledge of moral truth, and their duties—justice to others' rights and charity, which unifies life.

But who are the people? Those who work, that is, the great mass of humanity, "the real basis of society and in a way the fruitful soil where the other classes, relatively few in number, have their roots and whence they draw their life; for all life comes from the people; physical life, the preservation of which, dependent on certain material conditions is due to their continual toil; moral life which has its source in the unchangeable principles of justice, equity and charity, the feeling of which is never extinguished in the people, and which are always even at the epochs when they seem most shaken, the people's traditional rule and practical law".[1]

Society can be reorganized in the interest of the people. But they must do it themselves. "The wretchedness which, they tell you, is without remedy, you must yourselves remedy. And as the obstacle does not originate from Nature but proceeds from Man, you will be able to apply the remedy when you shall will it." But you have failed hitherto because "you had in your hands that which overthrows; you had not in your hearts that which founds. . . . Probe your soul and nearly all of you will there discover this secret thought: I work and suffer: that man is an idler, yet he enjoys himself to excess; why he rather than I? And the desire you nourish is to be in his place, to live and act like him.

"Now this is not the way to destroy the evil. It is the way to perpetuate it. The evil is in the injustice, and not in the circumstance of this or that man profiting by it. Do you wish to succeed? Do good by good means."[2]

But single men are powerless in this new day. Let the people combine therefore to bring this high freedom which alone can mean progress. They can be trusted to reorganize society; witness how orderly Lyons was in 1831 when they had control. When they unite

[1] Lamennais, *Politique à l'usage du peuple: Du Peuple*, p. 315.

[2] Lamennais, *Book of the People*, chap. III, p. 14.

to use their intelligence and love to bring about freedom, the new day will be here, for then the development of science will enable man to be free from the fatality of nature; machinery will bring new leisure and new intellectual powers. Art will be the inspirer and interpreter. This is inevitable because man is good and a divine Providence is guiding him.

The influence of Saint Simon runs all through this thought. It is in Lamennais' attempt to reconcile material and moral development, in his vast faith in industry and science, and his belief that the development of credit would help to bring the material well-being without which the could be no moral progress. It is in his glorification of those who work. It is in his insistence on the possibility of reorganizing society for the good of the many and on the need of association. It is in his notion of the threefold activity of men. It is in his belief that the golden age is in the future and that we shall arrive not by looking to the institutions of the past but by taking hold of the morality of a new era. It is his whole theory of art.

But in his fundamental belief in the sovereignty of the people Lamennais differed sharply from Saint Simon and his followers up to the time of Leroux, and went back to Rousseau's *Contrat social* and the revoluntionary tradition. His idea of liberty was not obedience to experts but free development of personality by the exercise of sovereignty with all that that included of rights and duties. He also believed in a God as the Saint Simonians did not.

This philosophy the Abbé preached with all the fire of his powerful and appealing personality, and with amazing effect. When *Les Paroles d'un croyant* was in the press, the printer went to Sainte Beuve who had charge of it, and said that his men could not set it up without being "roused as if transported", that his printing shop was "all in the air over it", and that indeed he would see it through since he had started, but that it was bound to make such a stir that he would not dare to put his name to it. When it appeared, it was read in grand *salons,* in shops, in garrets, in country cottages. It created a furor of discussion. It was translated into several languages. In the course of a few years it had gone into a hundred editions. It marked a date in the formation of the nineteenth century public opinion.

In form it is modelled after the *Book of the Pilgrim* of the Polish

Mickiewicz, who was lecturing at the Sorbonne. A series of parables, stories, visions of evil and of the city of God, written with Biblical passion and rhythm, enunciate a high religious faith, mystical in character, emotional in its appeal and presented with a concreteness of imagery and simplicity that made it loved by simple folk.

"But their (the masters of the world) empire will endure but a time and we are touching the end of that time.

"A great battle will be delivered and the angel of justice and the angel of love will fight with those who are armed to bring back among men the reign of justice and the reign of love.

"And many will die in this battle and their name will remain on the earth like a ray of the glory of God.

"That is why all ye who suffer, take courage, fortify your hearts; for tomorrow will be the day of trial, the day when every man shall give his life joyfully for his brothers; and that which follows will be the day of deliverance."

"Men, equal among themselves, are born for God alone, and whoever says the contrary says a blasphemy.

"The law of God is a law of love and love does not raise itself above others."

"And the violence which will put you in possession of liberty, is not the fierce violence of thieves and brigands, nor injustice, vengeance, cruelty; but a strong inflexible will, a calm and generous courage."

"In the scale of eternal law, your will weighs more than the will of kings; for it is the people who make the king and kings are made for their people and the peoples are not made for the kings."

So he chants. Let the people have patience to try and try again though they fail not only seven times, but seventy times seven. "There is nothing so grand as a people marching under the eye of God to win its liberty."

"The farm laborer bears the burden of the day, is exposed to the rain, the sun, the winds, to prepare by his toil the harvest which will fill his granaries in the autumn.

"Justice is the harvest of people.

"The artisan rises before the dawn, lights his small lamp and wears himself out without rest to gain a bit of bread which shall feed him and his children.

"Justice is the bread of peoples.

"The merchant refuses no labor, complains of no toil, uses up his body and forgets his sleep in order to amass wealth.

"Liberty is the wealth of peoples."

"If there is a people who esteems justice and liberty less than the farm laborer his harvest, the artisan a bit of bread or the merchant riches. . . . raise about that people a high wall that its breath may not infect the rest of the earth . . .

"When the great day of judgment comes. . . the people . . . who has placed true good in its heart above material good, who has spared no toil to conquer it, no weariness, no sacrifice, will hear this word:

"To him who has a soul, the reward of souls. Because you have loved liberty and justive above all things, come, and possess liberty and justice forever."

Parables of poor men living lives of Rousseaulike simplicity in contrast to the dangers, suspicions, cruelty and anguish in those of rulers, wierd tales of monarchs meeting and drinking blood and planning to frighten the people, of their fate ultimately in rags when the faith and thought of the people shall have broken their chains, prose stanzas in long dialogues, rise to heights of challenge and aspiration and courage.

"Young soldier, where are you going?

"I am going to fight for the poor that they may not forever be despoiled of their part in the common heritage.

"Blessed by your arms, young soldier."

Le Livre du peuple was only less known. It might have been found on any republican's book-shelf let him be never so humble. It was spread among the workmen by active propaganda. It too was immediately translated.

The writings of the workmen, now a fable by Lachambeaudie or an obscure almanac writer, or the Christian vision of a Perdiguier, echo with similar Biblical emphasis, Lamennais' long passages on the high dignity of work, his ideal of unity and of self-interest conquered, and his vision that material change is not enough. It is in

the work of Weitling that his influence is fullest, for Weitling had a spirit of the prophetic order akin to that of Lamennais and therefore quite naturally took on those long swelling periods with series after series of images. But he was of the people and his images therefore often have a reality about them deeper than those of Lamennais. His reordering of society was closer to that of Saint Simon too and was more definitely based on trades. But whether they imitated him or not, these workers just beginning to articulate their lives, the fact that the voice of this priest was lifted calling them to fulfil their destiny and win their right to live, asserting that they were to be the base of the new society and that the development of their lives was the central concern of their time, helped to make them conscious and articulate.

In the forties another theory of socialism was already growing, but it was not to become dominant in workmen's circles until after 1848. Frederick Engels was in Paris collaborating on the *Réforme* for which he wrote articles on German socialism and English Chartism. In imitation of Buret's work he studied the conditions of the workers in England and gathered documents carefully, and then under the influence of the thunders of Carlyle's style, wrote *The Miseries of the Working Classes in England*, published in 1844. This was one of the earliest statements of the belief not in general brotherhood, but in a strong development of workers' movements to attain their freedom. In a review of Carlyle's *Past and Present* Engels paid his tribute to Carlyle's anger and shame over present society, but attacked his socialism based on the old feudal idea and depending not on the masses of the people, but great leaders. He published this article in the *Les Annales Franco-allemandes* which were being issued in Paris by a group who believed that if German philosophical ideas were combined with the French gift of practicality the highest European culture would be attained.

Marx was also in this group in 1843.[1] When the Annals stopped, he worked with Heine and Ruge and others on *Vorwaerts*, a paper which became so objectionable to the Prussian government that Guizot suppressed it and expelled Marx from France in 1845. He had been studying the French proletariat as he saw it in action, however, and trying to establish some connection between ideals and the actual

[1] **Longuet, J., *Le politique internationale du Marxisme, Karl Marx et la France*, p. 13; Andler, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-39.**

experience of men. By 1847 he had passed to his belief that not ideas but economic conditions have been the determining factor in history. He and Engels began to attack the idealism of the Federation of the Just of which Weitling was still the leader and which the London group had urged them to join. Marx broke with Weitling in 1846 and the next year he and Engels became the leaders of the federation, for it was now ready to give up idealistic socialism and adhere to their policies.

Then with London as its center, the Federation of the Communists was formed, the new society which grew into the modern socialist party. Marx and Engels drew up its manifesto to take the place of the one written by Weitling in 1838. This was the *Communist Manifesto* which has ever since been the text of socialists. It probably owed something to French historians like Michelet for the concept of the place of the plain people in society. It took its analysis of the evils of present society from Saint Simon and Fourier, but it attacked the utopians for not seeing the necessity of changing the whole social order and for the futility of their hope that the force of ideas will bring the directing classes to act contrary to their economic interests. It no longer called on men to love each other in universal brotherhood. Its battle cry was "Workers of the world, unite." And it meant workers of the world against the rest of the world. It pictured two modern classes as crystallizing more and more, with more and more opposing interests, with more concentration of wealth in the hands of fewer people and more and more people driven into the class of the dispossessed until finally the latter should be driven to such straits that a great revolution would sweep away the whole system and set up the rule of the workers. It was published in London in German a few weeks before the February days of 1848; and in Paris in a French translation in the Spring at the very moment when a revolutionary government was functioning there; in London again in an English translation in 1850 in the Chartist journal, *The Red Republican.*

While the ideas which were to dominate the second half century were thus beginning to take form in the midst of the chaos of this seminal period, the utopian socialists, the workers' societies and the liberals were rapidly rushing to a climax of activity.

The success of Cabet and Louis Blanc with their books and newspapers showed that by 1840 a wide reading public among the work-

men had developed. Indeed from 1830 the rise of the press was as important as the secret societies. The most intelligent of the workmen began to study the social question. Liberal journals in Paris became popular among them, published their articles and letters, discussed their problems and the new religion. Cabet's *Populaire,* Lamennais's *L'Avenir* of 1830 and his *Le Monde* of 1836-37, *Le National,* the paper most sympathetic to workmen until 1843 and then somewhat more conservative, Raspail's *Réformateur* and, after 1843 the *Réforme* established by men like Ledru Rollin who supported the left wing of the Chamber, all these were turning the workmen's thoughts in the direction of self assertion and fundamental change in government. As in England, various provincial journals were started. George Sand promised her friend Duvernet help in his enterprise of starting a paper in his province, la Chatre, and cited the example of Lamartine whose writing for *Le Bien publique* of his native Macon made his paper more influential than most of the Parisian journals. She herself assisted in founding Leroux's paper *La Revue Independante* in 1841 and in 1843 *L'Eclaireur du Monde,* which were to expound his radical philosophy based on "solidarity and equality".

The workmen themselves began to publish papers in which they asserted their own importance.[1] "The most numerous and most useful class in society is without contradiction the class of the workers", began *L' Artisan,* triumphant over workers' part in the overturn of 1830. "Without it capital has no value; without it no machines, no industry, no commerce. All classes which are supported by it, which profit by its toil know it well; it alone seems not to know it or to take no care of it. . . . Three days have been enough to change our function in the economy of society and we are now the main part of that society, the stomach which gives life to the upper classes, now brought back to their true functions as servants." The *Journal des Ouvriers* and *Peuple* were similar in tone. Anger at a government which neglected their share in the Revolution of 1830, warnings that competition meant only misery for the workers, calls to organization—workmen's sheets were full of these in the early thirties. But each paper lasted for only a few issues.

[1] Weill, G., *Les Journaux ouvriers de Paris;* David Stern, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848,* vol. I, pp. lv-lvi, p. 315 *seq.; L'Atelier,* 31 July, 1850.

There was silence until the outburst of 1839. Then Pierre Vinçard started *La Ruche Populaire* as the organ of the Saint Simonian group. It had strong class consciousness but refused to belong to any one party exclusively.

> What are banners,—
> Parties or colors?
> Are we not brothers
> In shame, misery, sorrows?

With this as its motto, it set out to attack materialism and to create a spirit of brotherhood. It was natural that it should be the workmen's journal to print the most verse. Various communist papers indicated the increasing tendency to extreme radicalism and the titles suggested the vastness and quality of hopes—*L'Homme Libre,* a secret revolutionary paper, not edited by workers but publishing their writing, *Fratérnité* with a board of editors entirely of workers after 1843.

The best workman's paper was not of this extreme nature. It was *L'Atelier,* founded in 1840 by workers of skilled trades in Paris. To have a share in it, a man must work with his hands and be presented by two of the original founders. The leading spirits were the printers Laneveux and Pascal, the locksmith Gilland, the woodcutter Corbon, and Agricol Perdiguier, men from whom one would expect the lofty, thoughtful tone which characterized their paper. They wanted to appeal to all parties. They discussed political, religious, economic and moral questions; they gave news of strikes, conferences between men and employers, attempts at association. They stood squarely for workers' solidarity. In 1844 they gave warning that if some relief did not come as a result of propaganda, the workers would be taking to more violent methods. The editors themselves did not believe in violence but built their hope on peaceful association of the workers and the intervention of the state in regulating the conditions of labor by such measures as establishing a minimum wage and owning the railroads. The sensational appeals of secret societies and the simpler views of society of the communist papers were often more popular with the workers, but *L'Atelier* had wide influence, and strength enough to survive even the turmoil of the days of 1848. It was forced out of existence in 1850 when, under the reaction, new laws restricting the press were passed.

The expansion of the press of the working class, however ephemeral each sheet might have been, indicated that a widening group of people was reading. But it is significant of the French worker's interest in politics that the *Réforme* and the *Réformateur* appealed to him more than any of the papers devoted more completely to the economic question. The debates in the chamber were being followed by men who had no objections to violence if their miseries were overlooked too long. The opposition in the Chamber could now appeal to the interests of these people to support them, could point to their analysis of the evils of the present regime and urge their own reforms all the more effectively. It was no wonder that the government in 1835 took measures against the press. However propaganda went on in spite of the government.

The workmen, then, themselves increasingly articulate, and class conscious, were aided by the intellectuals who joined secret societies, who helped the press, who wrote books under the influence of the new religion that was transforming romanticism. In 1847 a more terrible industrial crisis than previous ones maddened the workers to be ready for any violence. They were just ready to take part in a movement of the opposition in the Chamber which was coming to a head.

Under the leadership of Thiers these representatives were seeking reform of some kind as eagerly as the socialists or the wretched factory workers.[1] They were chiefly mortified at the foreign policy of the government which left the Poles to the Russians. They were shocked at the corruption in high circles over concessions for railroads. They disapproved of the cynical political juggling with cabinets that went on in the king's effort to establish his power. In 1843 Lamartine stopped voting with the government because he hoped no more from them. It marked his swing to the left and was a sign of the gathering forces of the time, for he had entered the Chamber in 1834 a staunch conservative filled with the old traditions of aristocratic responsibility for the good of the people, and he had in general supported the monarchy. But Guizot was secure in his majority and the opposition on the whole powerless. It was useless to appeal to the country as a whole. It was true that in the south of France the landed aristocracy, the clergy and the people who all de-

[1] Weill, G., *La France sous la Monarchie Constitutionnelle;* Seignobos, *Histoire politique de l'Europe Contemporaine.*

tested Louis Philippe and wanted the legitimate line restored, would support the opposition. The army also would help, for there the Bonapartists were strong and developed a religion of Napoleon which reached the people and became identified with the revolutionary tradition. The transference of Napoleon's remains to Paris in 1840 had completed the apotheosis, and the cult of French glory which grew up, increased anger at the power of the plutocracy and at the colorless bourgeois king who could not sit his horse straight while reviewing his army. But these groups were by no means the majority of electors. The majority were quite content with things as they were, for they wanted to let business alone. The opposition understood that the only way to combat the ministry was to get new electors and therefore they raised the cry of electoral reform, using the socialist analysis for propaganda.

A coalition was formed of all the parties from the center to the extreme left wing radicals. They believed in universal suffrage, but knowing that it would be hopeless to try for that, they agreed on 100 francs as the *cens electoral* and certain professions as carrying a vote. This would add about 200,000 voters. Brought before the Chamber in 1847 it was rejected. Then they resolved on a series of banquets in different parts of the country to educate the people. The speeches at these tended to become more and more radical. In Lille, Ledru-Rollin who had been in the Chamber since 1841, refused to toast reform as a method of securing the present monarchy: "For us, gentlemen, the people is all. To pass by way of the political question to arrive at social amelioration is the progress which characterizes the democratic party in distinction to other parties."[1] Henceforth he was the leader of that party and working for the overturn of the monarchy.

It was the very spirit of the Chartist movement in England, but it was becoming strong enough in France to make the government take steps to suppress the banquets. In 1848 preparatory to their struggle over the suffrage in the Chamber, the reformists planned one last banquet in Paris. But the ministry forbade it. A confusion of orders led to street manifestations on February 22, the date originally set for it; the people were angry that the banquet was not held; the atmosphere was tense on the 23rd. In the evening the people marched aimlessly, singing. They went to the offices of

[1] Daniel Stern, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 23.

Le National where one of the editors spoke from the window accusing the ministers and assuring the masses of their right to demand the dissolution of the assembly and to insist on their right of meeting. Some soldiers shot among them as they marched away and then their anger flashed out. A writer of the time comments, "At once one heard the dry noise of picks on the pavments and the heavy fall of the trees of the boulevard; it was the people making its barricades again. Its wrath appeased for a moment was reanimated with more fury".[1] The king dismissed Guizot, but it was too late. On the 24th a wagon passed through the streets of Paris bearing the dead body of one of the fallen of the day before; a child of the people stood in the center representing Vengeance and the workers riding on the cart called for action. It set the crowd on fire. Their ominous To arms! swept Paris into days of fighting, swept away the monarchy, took the people into the Chamber and set up a provisory government of which Lamartine was the head and Louis Blanc the arbitrator in the Luxembourg, striving to organize industry according to his theories, to work out industrial arbitration, practical association among the workers and government organization of industry to provide all men with work. The principle of the right to live had for the moment conquered the right to property.

[1] Daniel Stern, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 141.

CHAPTER IV

THE APPEARANCE OF THE SELF-EDUCATED WORKINGMAN POET IN FRANCE

The appearance of the articulate, self-educated workingman out of these social conditions was at once a manifestation of the rising assertion of the right to life for the masses and a cause of further growth of class- consciousness. Over and over the story of Perdiguier and Cooper repeated itself with only slight variations in the form. Men who became leaders of workmen, tell in their memoirs the story of early poverty, of barren church schools or the paltry three winters in a French school of the commune where they were lucky to learn some reading and some writing; of contact then with workingmen's discussions which led them to join political or trade associations and so find enlarged views of life, of reading—history, poetry, whatever came to hand, and then of organizing new political movements, new opportunities for education. A Samuel Bamford spoke in England from 1819; by the forties, R. G. Gammage while cobbling for a living, was lecturing for the Chartists, helping to organize, learning the material at first hand which he later wrote into his *History of Chartism;* William Lovett was striving for educational opportunities for workmen, struggling for "Bread, Knowledge and Freedom" as he later indicated in the title of his autobiography; John Jacob Holyoake had served his apprenticeship as a mechanic and was beginning to spread the doctrines that man is not born wicked but that it is his environment which makes him so, that a whole new religion is necessary, one which shall be purely secular in its appeal. And these men were producing a large body of verse, narrative, articles of propaganda, and of high quality.

In France also workers were battling their way to education; and by 1838-1839, a literary outburst began, widespread and varied in form. The many new journals afforded them a medium, their own and liberal sheets. Volumes of verse were published—Pierre Lachambeaudie's *Fables Populaires* with its contrasts between rich and poor, and its Saint Simonian hopes, Hegesippe Moreau's *Myosotis,* sad with poverty and the longing of a sensitive, delicate dreamer. Béranger was writing Reboul that the fragments of his

verse which had been printed in various regular periodicals, showed him to be a real poet; and this is the time when Reboul, who had been an elegaic poet of old romanticism, became impassioned over the great national currents of his time and wrote scathing alexandrines on the moral degeneration of the people and of kings. Magu was writing his *Le bon Dieu s'est Moqué de Moi* with its dry humor over the unequal distribution of wealth, and by 1840 he had had a volume published. Perdiguier's *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* of 1839 described the system, pointed the way to reform, gave the world the songs of the companions; it met with praise from Chateaubriand and Lamartine, drew George Sand to seek acquaintance with the author, set the societies into a fury over his revelation of their secrets. Already in 1835 the southern Jasmin had published the first volume of *Papillotos* (Curl Papers) suggesting his trade in his title and giving his *Soubenirs,* a legend of the people and some political poems glorying in the rising people. In 1842 his second volume appeared and he himself was in Paris where he captivated the literary world. In 1841 Perdiguier published the second edition of this book on *compagnonnage; La Revue Indépendante,* founded by Sand and Pierre Leroux, published verse by Charles Ponçy of Toulon and by the Parisian Savinien Lapointe, and heralded a new day for literature; Olinde Rodrigues gathered into a volume most of the verse of *La Ruche Populaire* and in the preface urged it as evidence of the formation of a new social party that would change civilization.

By 1846 Pierre Dupont's *Chant des ouvriers*[1] was sung at many workmen's gatherings, Charles Ponçy had published *Les Marines* and *Le Chantier,*[2] and had written much of *Chansons de chaque métier*[3]. Agricol Perdiguier rejoiced in his *Biographie* over the appearance of a new spirit in poetry brought by the workers: "What movement in the working class in the last ten years! . . . But this movement has nothing brutal in it; it is entirely intellectual, moral, pacific and civilizing. Yes, poets with hardened hands have risen on every side, and disdain will be conquered. These poets are the baker Reboul, the barber Jasmin, the carpenters Durand and Roly; the printers Hegesippe Moreau, Lachambeaudie and Voitelin; the

[1] *Song of the Workers.*

[2] *The Mason's Scaffolding.*

[3] *Songs of Every Trade.*

weaver Magu; the tin-smith Beuzeville; the calico-printer Lebreton; the shoemaker Lapointe; the maker of measures, Vinçard; the mason Ponçy; the locksmith Gilland; the dressmaker Marie Carré of Dijon and many others. . . . None of these poets sing of wine and prostitution; no, it is love of work and of men which inspires them. They have scored impudent vices, they extol humble virtues, the future is one of their muses! Their songs have nothing in them base and futile; the spirit is always grave and religious."

As in the case of Perdiguier, the lives of these men expressing the workers were as important for literature as their writings. It is sometimes hard to define why a man should be considered in this group. The line cannot be drawn simply on a basis of those who worked with the tools of their trade or of those who owned or did not own their own tools. The fundamental quality identifying them with the new mass expression was feeling of the significance of work in the world, of the right of the poor to life and of their longing for beauty and for expression—a feeling not of mere sympathetic onlooking but of identification with all this. Though Pierre Dupont actually worked in a silk mill only a few days as a small boy and Hegesippe Moreau worked at the printing trade for some time, Dupont is much more genuinely an expression of workers than Moreau. He felt as they did, thought as they did, and in the end found his greatest satisfaction in contact with them; but Moreau was a romantic, longing always for some infinity of beauty remote from earth and the struggles of men around him. Only at times when he caught the poignancy of poverty—his as well as theirs—or of their battles in the streets, was he one of them. Jasmin might be considered one of the "little bourgeosie", for he was a barber who owned his shop and even a little plot of ground which he had bought with his savings as southern workmen usually dreamed of doing. Yet the sources of his poetry lay deep in the spirit of the people and he prided himself on belonging to them. Both he and Dupont, then, must be considered if one is to have anything like a complete picture of workers' expression of the thirties and forties, as much as the simple weaver Magu, or Perdiguier or Lachambeaudie or Ponçy or any of the rest of the hand-workers.

The death of Hegesippe Moreau in 1838 and the publication of his one volume *Myosotis* in the same year roused a storm of comment in Paris, for the feeling ran high that somehow the material-

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ism of the time had let a rare spirit die, suffering from poverty and unrecognized. Most people saw in him a French Chatterton—a pathetic embodiment of romanticism. Eugène Sue's novel of a few years later scored society for allowing such a tragedy and somehow connected it with the whole misery of industrialism. The workers, those who were already articulate, saw in Moreau the printer, one of themselves, who like them had craved beauty, suffered misery and died as so many of them did, in a hospital for the poor.

Born at Paris in 1810, an illegitimate child, he was soon taken to Provins where his father became a teacher in the Collège de Provins, and his mother a servant. They both died soon after in poverty, and the small boy was placed in a seminary, first at Meaux and then near Fontainebleau, by the woman with whom his mother had been in service. Curiously in spite of the generosity and kindness he seems to have met, he looked back on this time with bitterness and wrote satirical verse on it. At fifteen he was apprenticed to a printer of Provins, M. Lebeau, and for about four years lived more happily than at any other time of his life. He loved Louise, the daughter of M. Lebeau, called her his "sister" and later wrote some of his most pleasing verse to her. He was full of poetic dreams, happy in a world which seemed full of goodness, worked well at his trade, studied the classics, won the interest of M. Lebrun of the Academy, who persuaded him to go to Paris. It was probably his undoing, for he was never meant to struggle with the great, cruel capital.

Still, he went to work in the printing shop of Firmin Didot, and with all the ardor of his youth heralded a new day of freedom for the masses of the people and of glory for poetry because of printing presses. The power of printing was the cry of his time; and especially the miracle of it was just dawning on the poor. Probably none of the many poems written on the significance of the printer's trade equalled Moreau's *Epître sur l'imprimerie,* dedicated to M. Didot when the poet was nineteen. Liberty, the people, these watchwords caught him too in 1830 and he fought during the three days of revolution.

But from this point his life broke. He grew bitter over poverty which he hated. He could not stick to any work. In vain Lebrun tried to get him into the royal printing-house. He loathed the sense of being under some one's protection. He tried tutoring and failed. He fell in with some wild young Parisians who were de-

lighted with his spirit. He lost his purity, his ideals, his contact with reality. He longed for something, something else, some vague beauty that he could not define or reach. It was the malady of the romantic poets of his time. It was their scorn of hard, daily facts. It was their feeling that life was all nothingness. He wandered the streets of Paris often with no place to go. He was hungry and cold. He slept on benches by the Seine. In 1833 he was ill in a hospital. Then he went back to Provins where he found some of the friendliness of earlier days. His poem *L'Hiver* belongs to this time. For a moment his experience took him into the sorrow of most workers; for a moment he was touched with hope for them and himself, and he could write of it all in exquisite, appealing verse. But that passed too. He started a paper, *Diogène,* full of violent political satire, vigorous and witty, but offensive to the public.

Then back to Paris he went, tried the printing trade again, was dismissed for poor work, tried teaching again, again failed—found life now all sorrow and disgust—tried journalism, but the regular grind of it as a steady thing wore on him. He knew that his only field was verse, and there was no sale for that. The world had no place for his gift; it would just as soon he died as not—so he felt, and this feeling persisted though a friend did succeed in getting some pieces printed and he heard bits of praise, eespecially from Felix Pyat, the brilliant revolutionary editor and writer. He died, poor, hopeless.

Then people interested in him, published his *Myosotis,* one of the few volumes of real poetry that the workers might claim. A few poems on the misery of the poor, a few political poems—all of them elegies to the heroes who had fallen, a rollicking, delightful tale of the *L'Ile des mossus* (Island of the Hunchbacks) where one had either to be a hunchback or appear to be in order to be allowed to live, lovely pictures of scenes of his childhood, a graceful tale of the woman who had received him at her farm when he left the hospital in Paris, laments on his own sorrow in living, it is a slim volume, but it has deservedly run into numerous editions. Often he imitated—André Chenier in iambics, Béranger in some of the songs, Barthélemy, the popular satirist of the early thirties, in his satire. But the charm of his own spirit is there too, rare grace, sometimes mischief, dramatic power, finely observed detail, music

of verse. He himself said that he was not a great poet, but that he was a poet. He was right.

Myosotis and four *Contes* make up the whole of his work. The tales are written in pure prose almost Attic in quality, one of Hercules' sister and her sacrifice for him, another of the white mouse who cheered the young dauphin languishing in the prison-like castle of Louis XI, who showed him the sufferings of the prisoners and who finally turned out to be the Fairy of Tears—a tale not only exquisitely delicate in conception but powerful in its concentrated detail of horrors of Louis XI's reign. Though Moreau had no permanent folk feeling, no class consciousness, his life coincides with the beginnings of its development and his voice was one of the first to articulate it in its first form.

The thread of his life was curiously woven into the pattern with that of Perdiguier, who was living at Paris and writing songs of union for his companions in the *devoirs* and who the next year after Moreau's death, published his *Livre du Compagnonnage,* and with that of the Saint Simonian group of whom Lachambeaudie and Vinçard were the two singers.

Pierre Lachambeaudie was born in 1807 in a small place in the north of France where his father was a farmer. Like other country boys he had only slight elementary school training. He soon learned to know French industry from various angles, for he went south, first of all to Lyons. He worked as a bookkeeper in this city of radical philosophy and restless silk-weavers ready to stir up revolts. Then he worked on the railroad between Saint Etienne and Roanne, the one developing silk and metallurgical industries, the other cotton. Railroads and factories caught his imagination—he saw in the development of machinery a new opportunity for freeing men.

But the evangelist in his nature took him to join the Saint Simonians at Menilmontant in the days when Enfantin was the head of the community there. Here his education was continued. His verse shows not only Saint Simonian philosophy, but also the influence of the Vulgate and the Latin classics. He knew modern literature too. He made a translation of Burn's *To a Daisy* which keeps the tone of the original surprisingly; he seems to have read French literature of the eighteenth century. But it was above all Aesop and LaFontaine who gave him his favorite form.

Like Moreau he was more of a poet than a practical man. When the Saint Simonian community was broken up, he was left adrift and for years in Paris suffered the miseries of the worst poverty. Perhaps his original contribution to La Fontaine's *The Ant and the Grasshopper* was in part justification of his own life. It became with him *The Grasshopper, the Ant and the Dove* and began with La Fontaine's last line:

"Eh bien! dansez maintenant!"
A dit la fourmi cruelle.
La colombe survenant:
"Pour la cigale, dit-elle,
J'ai des graines à son choix.
Si la pauvre créature
Ne reçut de la nature
Pour tout trésor que sa voix,
De faim faut-il qu'elle meure?
Vous travaillez; à toute heure
Elle chante les moissons;
Ainsi tous nous remplissons
La loi que Dieu nous impose."
L'oiseau, sans dire autre chose,
A tire d'aile aussitôt,
Part, et rapporte bientôt
Force grains dont la cigale
A son aise se régale.
O fourmi, ta dureté
A l'egoiste peut plaire:
Colombe, moi je prefère
Ta tendre simplicité.[1]

In his own misery he was kept from despair by this very "tender simplicity", which found an outlet in sympathy with the people. He was learning to understand their insecurity, the hardships and dangers of their wives and daughters, the follies of their ignorance, their rightness of heart, their hopes. He was well aware that original sin could not account for their sufferings. In his fable,

[1] " 'Well then, dance now,' said the cruel ant. A dove happening along said, 'I have many seeds for the grasshopper, to suit her choice. If the poor creature received from nature no treasure but her voice, must she die of hunger? You work; all the while she sings of the harvests. So we all fulfil the law that God imposes on us.' Without saying another word, the bird at once went swiftly away and soon brought back many seeds with which the grasshopper regaled herself at will. Oh ant, your hardness may be pleasing to the egoist. Dove, I prefer your tender simplicity."

the barren fig tree answered Jesus that if it bore no fruit, it was because it had not been nourished and watered, and Jesus took it to the foot of a mountain where in rich, well-watered soil it bore fruit of great beauty. So it would be with the poor, said the poet, and he held to his Saint Simonian faith and his own far vision of steam, which with all its potential cruelties could bring men opportunity for life, of great creative minds searching for causes and of the rhythms of history.

Fable after fable he wrote for the workers. At last in 1839 his own misery was somewhat relieved when the generosity of Enfantin made it possible for his little volume *Fables Populaires* to be printed. Large numbers of workmen bought it. In 1841 and 1842 it was reprinted and crowned twice by the Academy. By 1852 it had gone into the tenth edition. Lachambeaudie had added *Fables Nouvelles,* verses increasingly sombre in tone and headed with the sorrowful *Sic vos non vobis.* Sometimes his fables were printed by radical editors in almanachs or journals. Sometimes the author himself said them at meetings of workmen. They liked the philosophy of them, their variety of incidents from simple peasants' toil, from natural history, or occasionally from the shop. They liked to be told that the Chamber of Deputies behaved like school-boys or like a cock-chafer on a string. They liked the unelaborated pictures of nature—the Seine in Spring when washwomen chatter by the banks, the canal with its ox-drawn boats, the woods where bees hum, the shine of a drop of dew on a butterfly's wing or on a flower. They did not mind in the least if a log flooding the ashes with tears was overdrawn or if drops of water could not possibly turn into a pearl inside an oyster shell. Here was a story-teller who understood them.

By 1848 the social criticism of his fables and his membership in Blanqui's club made the pillars of society regard him as a dangerous instigator to civil war. But nothing could have been more contrary to the truth, for he was of the most gentle and pacific nature imaginable. Many a workman might have told how he had been stirred to readiness for any violence by passionate speeches at secret meetings, and how Lachambeaudie had then risen and said one of his fables, snapping with humor or painting a fine hope and showing a better way than force, and how calm had come over the meeting and it had dispersed in peace. But Lachambeaudie was a marked

man, and during the days of the June insurrection, he was arrested though he was staying quietly at home with his family. Béranger used his influence to get him out of prison, went himself to carry the good news of his success, found the poet as always calm and smiling. "I knew that you and God would not abandon me", he said, and then with Fourierists, Saint Simonians and others set about publishing a radical almanach.

He seems to have been an embodiment of one of his fables, *The Overturned Nest,* in which he gives a picture of storms which destroy a bird's nest and the bird crying, "There is no more love in life"—of a revolution failing and a woman moaning, "There can be no more prayer now, for there is no God"—of a journal failing and a would-be writer wailing that there is no more poetical inspiration in the world. "The bird did not love," says Lachambeaudie shortly, "the woman had no faith, the other was not a poet. The heart of the just is the source of prayer and love of inspiration." Like Perdiguier, at the time of the reaction Lachambeaudie paid for his belief in the people by being sent into exile. But into the pattern of the revolutionary year, he had woven his threads of piety, of faith in the power of the heart, of peace, of appealing verse, of devotion. The answer to poverty and sorrow, he said, is living for the welfare of brother workmen.

His fables were favorites at the Sunday afternoon meetings which Pierre Vinçard had inaugurated at cafés. Vinçard was himself a popular workman able to keep the Saint Simonian group together after the middle class members had scattered over the earth. Between 1832 and 1835 he published several works all lyrical with faith in the future—*The Future is Here, It Will Come, The Future is For Us.* He especially believed in the importance of poetry, and in his journal, *La Ruche Populaire,* published as much verse as prose. Some of Savinien Lapointe's plaints found a place here. Here were fables of the carpenter Roly, imitations of Lachambeaudie, none of them having the same concentration and grace, and mostly seeming quite far-fetched in their application. Nevertheless under Roly's exaggerated play on the name of the paper in one of them, was the real tribute of a man who had been nearly down and out. A discouraged bee was about to give up when a ray of light sent by Phoebus encouraged her. In gratitude she gathered honey diligently from every kind of flower, working for man and God. But

she had no place to put her treasure. Then she heard a bell rung by a good villager who had built a shelter. She joined the swarm, glad to be no longer alone. The bee, he ended, is I, the villager is you, Vinçard, the shelter *La Ruche Populaire*.[1]

Vinçard himself wrote songs and their music, always gay and vigorous. He declares that "the joyous accents" of his "verse are always to be used to comfort the proletariat. Their life is sad and bruised, worn with toil, sacrifice and fears, but a harmonious concert sings hope. The people are still in chains . . . but with the harmony of poetry I must cover their cries of vengeance." Or he cries, "Will no touch of poetry come to lighten the hearts of the people and scatter on them some flowers of illusion?" So gaily he calls to his "Foolish little muse" who is a "joyous coquette."

Poetry, then, was life to these workmen. Moreau felt that it was all that mattered, and he died for its escape from the agonies of a cruel world. For the Saint Simonians it was to be turned to fables to delight and improve, perhaps to make life easier by setting up illusions, a world of dreams and fancy where all life should be happy. For Perdiguier it was song to give expression in free time to the drama of work and the tour of France, and to make men "combine". More and more these workmen were singing.

Then in 1840 appeared Magu's first volume of verse and Gilland's paper, *L'Atelier*. Magu was the simplest of all the worker poets, characteristic of the generally untutored. His autobiographical verse, *To My Readers,* and his letters to George Sand reveal a droll, patient, dreaming, toiling figure of naive charm. He was born in Paris in 1788, but when he was eight, his family went to Tancron near Lizy-sur Ourcq. Three winters of school, generally the limit of educational opportunity for poor boys, apprenticeship to a weaver and the rest of his days weaving to keep an enormous family from misery—the outline was typical enough. But what flashes of light all through! The first reading of LaFontaine and with it realization of the meaning of art and attempts to write verse like LaFontaine, for long his "only friend". Then the "cousin" with whom he was in love and to whom he wrote his first verse, simple in expression and feeling, distinguished from other effusions of eighteen year olds by its matter of factness about jealousy. There are no plaints or frenzied protestations, simply bewilderment that any

[1] *La Ruche* means literally "Beehive".

complication should have arisen, gentle suggestion that tomorrow he will meet her at dawn and explain and then a practical suggestion of marriage. She was a good girl, he writes later, she could recognize a violet or a rose but she had no ideas about poetry. Still

> . . . . . l'esprit vient vite aux filles;
> Bientôt elle daigna me donner des avis,
> Elle m'en donne encor, parfois ils sont suivis.[1]

Finally he won her and that ended poetry for many a long day. Years of hard work made up their life. Every year a child arrived, he explained, until there were fourteen, but, he added, the poor man never complains of this for it is his fortune—he gets old a little faster, but the good Lord helps him. He was always devoted to his wife and broken hearted when she died. He wrote to her on a late birthday verses of plebeian candor commenting on her loss of beauty through the years of hard struggle which they had suffered together and the trials of having so many children, reminding her that it was time for her daughter to have a chance to shine now; but then with intimate charm he recalled their exploits when they were young and ate sour milk together out of the same bowl and found it delicious, shared each other's bread and cheese and caught at moments of conversation during the harvesting, and he remarked that if changes had come, she had kept her gaiety, and her good heart was always the same. This meant more to him than a fragile beauty. Musset's *Rolla* or other romantics' curious passion for "women of thirty" mark the contrast between this man of the people with his feet on the ground and the "malady of the century" which characterized much of the main line of literature.

His first volume of verse met with considerable success. He was given a pension of 100 francs by the Minister of Instruction and 200 more by the Crown. An amusing light is shed on his success by the last paragraph of a letter to Sand where he writes: "A charity lady of the parish of Saint Roche last year begged me to make a song for the month of Mary; this lady showed the song to the queen, who kept it and recommended me to the minister of public instruction; to thank the princess I sent her my volume; she has just sent me a hundred francs to thank me, and I to thank her

[1] "Understanding comes quickly to girls; soon she deigned to give me advice. She gives it still; sometimes it's followed."

again have just sent her three songs in honor of Madame the Virgin; I added to these a dozen alexandrines by way of dedication. We shall see who will get tired of thanking."[1] In 1842 his second volume of verse appeared, and in 1845 a collection from all of his verse made possible by a legacy from Charles Auguste Chopin, who left Sand and Béranger as his executors. In 1844 their letters show that they were engaged in the search for a publisher. From the first both of them welcomed the appearance of this true poet of the people. Béranger wrote in 1839: "I have found in you the artisan poet such as it seems to me he ought to be; concerned with expressing his intimate feelings colored by the objects with which he lives; without ambitious use of language or ideas; drawing only from his own source and own heart and not from books, paintings full of true feeling and practical philosophy. May an assured and tranquil lot be the fruit of the double labors of the poor weaver of Lizy. In becoming poet he has not scorned the shuttle, and his example will without doubt be of profit to many artisans who too often in order to transform themselves into literary figures, abandon the labor most often useful and honorable which can assure them their existence as citizens."

But for all Magu's hard work and his poetry, a tranquil lot was never his. His old age passed in misery, for half blind, and sometimes losing his memory, he could not weave. In the Revolution of 1848 he lost the pension which had been allowed him by the Crown and also that from the Minister of Instruction. His only luxury was the tobacco which George Sand sent him. But even in his misery he kept his early candor and patient acceptance of his fate. Sometimes delightful irony creeps into his letters as in the one to Sand where he tells of all the certificates and medals which different academies and literary societies give him, whereas if each of them would give him fifty centimes a day, he could live entirely at ease. His alert interest in the affairs of the world persisted. He bought newspapers with the few *sous* he managed to scrape together; he was enchanted with Thiers' *Histoire du Consulate et de l'Empire* which the author sent him; he was especially delighted with each new work of Sand. He died in 1860.

In George Sand's *La Ville Noire,* which appeared a month after his death, Audebert, the poet, is the portrait of Magu with only

[1] Quoted by Karenine, *George Sand*, vol III, p. 308, *seq.*

some slight changes. A master workman with longings to help his fellows as vast and vague often as a romantic's dreams of the infinite, Audebert often brought himself to periods of failure and discouragement, for he was no thinker and as he grew older, he was more and more irregular in his working habits. "He was a poet," the author comments. "Words came to him in abundance, and under these words was painting, life. He had a sense of idealized observation and his tenderness was easily provoked by the little dramas of the worker's life." The village knew how to appreciate him too. How proud they were when his first poem was published; the whole day was a celebration for him. Sand has caught the meaning for the people that one of them could articulate their lives and be recognized by the world. But though the poet sometimes reached the heights of exaltation when he thought that he was Pindar and proudly wore a laurel wreath, he had ideals of hand-work too; like many a worker, he was not too sure about all this fine writing. He would work furiously at his trade to show his comrades. But he would drop back into his reveries again, often into sadness. Then his susceptible heart would be warmed by friendship—how often the word was on his lips, how much he depended upon it. The whole village loved him and looked after him when he could no longer work. Never mind if you cannot reform the world, some worker would say to him, you write songs that we love; they help us to bear our miseries. That is better than writing a whole library. Then there would be great fête-days like that of the wedding of Tonine and Etienne, when he would sing of all the sufferings of toil, its test of a man and the little prides of accomplishment, the choice of love rather than wealth; of the bride growing up, her first realization of beauty in the world, her generosity; of wheels of industry whirring round and round—but they cannot drown the voice of love. Tenderness of heart, piety, yearning for beauty, respect for work—there they all were in Sand's Audebert as in Magu.

She had been his friend for years. Not only was it that she helped him to arrange for the publication of his third volume of verse and wrote a laudatory notice for it; he turned to her in any trouble or whenever any event of interest happened in his family, writing letters full of detail and confidence in her unfailing interest. His daughter is to be married to Gilland, a locksmith, she has no dowry except her needle and Gilland has only his smith's vice, but

she will be a good housekeeper and he a good workman, so that their future is in their own hands. They must begin with debts and the marriage will therefore be celebrated without an elaborate feast. Or he appeals to her interest in Gilland. "Poor Gilland! His health is gone; he has been sick a part of the summer. The doctor did not hesitate to tell him that overwork was the only cause, that he ought to stop writing and take more rest. Rest! When every week they lower the price of his labor and he does not know where it will stop. For him with his intelligence and good management, it is a small place, a small enmployment that is necessary. The person who would trust his interests to him will have only to praise himself that he gave him his confidence. I therefore dare to recommend him to you since you know him already and he is so happy as to be esteemed by you."

Here in a nutshell lay the problem of a writer among the workers, this of Gilland's as it was of Perdiguier and many of the others. Writing was sure to mean overdoing; the need was not to escape from industry altogether but to find a moderate amount of work which would leave time and strength for efforts like Gilland's to teach his fellows. Gilland himself would have expected the workers to win their freedom and make this possible. Magu turned to George Sand as to a benevolent Providence.

Gilland, one of the men like Perdiguier, self-taught by reading widely, and thinking deeply of the social needs of his time, was determined to stay a worker, to write for workers, to win them to association and enlightenment. When he was about to publish a volume of *Les Conteurs Ouvriers* in 1849, and Sand was to write the preface, he wrote out for her the details of his life, and more of them he gave later in the volume where the *Histoire de petit Guillaume* is straight autobiography except for one chapter. Sensitive and imaginative to an unusual degree, and frail into the bargain—he died of consumption in 1854 when only thirty-nine—he found life dark, tragic, at times almost impossible to bear; but then he pulled himself up with fine courage, devoted himself to the cause of workers, endured prison peacefully, and held to his faith that the new day of the People was dawning. He belonged to the group of workers whom George Sand knew intimately, and indeed he was the original of the heroic Arsene in *Horace.*

He was born in 1815 in the country, at Saint Aulde where his

father, like his ancestors for generations, was a shepherd. Three winters at school with a brutal master and time wasted on Latin drew from him only a bitter tirade that the king had wanted to keep the people as ignorant as possible. His real education began when he watched the sheep with his father out in the pastures, when he was left alone in the shelter to brave furious thunderstorms, or when, for long hours, his father, who had fought with Napoleon, would tell him tales of battles or old legends, the *Tales of Perrault* or the *Thousand and One Nights*. "All these marvellous stories fired my imagination, those of battles as well as the rest; I listened to them while I watched the clouds glide in the starlight and was cradled by the night breeze which put us to sleep with his caress." Or he was enraptured on winter evenings when his father played the bagpipe. A beauty-loving lad, put to work at eight to help eke out the family income.

Then his father moved to Paris where at eleven he was placed as an apprentice to a jeweler. It was not what he wanted to do—he loved painting; he dreamed of studying and becoming a painter even as Sand's Arsène did. He suffered tortures in his apprenticeship. But like Perdiguier and Cooper and the rest, he scraped together a few books with the *sous* he got for running messages and found a refuge in reading. The stuff he could get was bad—cheap, often obscene tales such as Buret investigating the condition of the working class condemned as their curse both in England and France. But then came the time when great novels were published serially, and he devoured them—ate dry bread to be able to afford them. At last he discovered Rousseau: "One day I opened Jean Jacques and I was saved," he writes in one breathless sentence. From that time he found great moralists from Marcus Aurelius to Fenelon, from Socrates to Saint Vincent de Paule.

Personal sorrows came upon him. He loved a woman of the streets, again like Arsène, and tried to reestablish her in life by his love and by bringing up her child, but in vain. Then he loved a young working girl, but she died of overwork before they could be married. In despair he let himself be dragged by his companions to cabarets, trying to find forgetfulness. Like Cooper when he decided to speak good English and found the scorn of those around him poured on his head—he a poor shoemaker to put on airs—Gilland often encountered similar misunderstandings, for he was

sensitive to a degree. He was at times overwhelmed too by the pressure of necessity: his old father to keep warm, his child to feed, and the terrific drive of the world pressing in and in to crush out all his chance for beauty. Beauty—an evanescent, remote thing, as he was seeking it then. It was the agony of spirit that broke Moreau.

But Gilland was a stronger man and strong new forces were gathering around him. He wrote verses to Magu expressing his discouragement on one occasion, and the old weaver answered him with the sound sense he needed: You think that the men of Paris among whom your father has taken you to live are bad; but they are not—they were born good and it is only their ignorance which makes them unjust toward a man who wishes to learn as you are doing today. Take courage. Your poetry has not yet arrived, but the time will come. It takes great effort for one to go off from the beaten track of his equals. I know too what it costs on the other side for a poor man to win a friendly glance from the rich man who thinks that the poor are incapable of feeling or of loving.

> Il nous croit étrangers aux douces reveries,
> Que font naître, au printemps, les bois et les prairies,
> L'aspect d'un beau ciel bleu, le doux chant des oiseaux,
> L'onde qui fuit courbant de fragiles roseaux
> Et les grands peupliers que cette onde reflète.
> * * * * *
> C'est à nous, cher Gilland, de le désabuser.[1]

With his finger exactly on the spot, he further urges that writing poetry is a happy way to use one's leisure. Many others spend themselves in orgies which wear out their bodies and close their souls, but to sing of humanity and of nature never brings a moment of remorse. Even in writing there are too many who waste themselves on frivolous words; it is well to imitate Perdiguier whose desire to enlighten his brothers makes him preach to them union and the love of justice. I myself, alas, he says, have imitated the light writers; but do you write to be useful to humanity. For myself I recognize my nothingness; but you are growing up in Paris and I

[1] "He thinks us strangers to the sweet reveries, to which, in the spring, the woods and meadows give birth, the sight of a beautiful blue sky, the sweet song of birds, the wave which flees, bending fragile reeds, and the tall poplars which this wave reflects . . . It is for us, dear Gilland, to disabuse him."

am showing you the rule which it is wise to follow. But more than this: never neglect the labor which brings a living; work is certain —poetry is a dream; the one provides for our needs, the other lifts us to God."

Magu's verse expressed the aim toward which Gilland was bound to work. He turned in the direction his whole life was henceforth to follow. Still he felt that he had learned one great lesson from his Parisian contacts: "that all men were unhappy, that they all cherished, some for one reason, some for another, a great sadness within themselves; that one discovered this malady even in those who denied it most obstinately and pretended nonchalance; that their moral misery far surpassed their material misery, however great that might be, in sum that there was a great sorrow at the center of all of us and that this sorrow could be comforted, diminished, could indeed disappear. From that to the work of moral renovation which I undertook as the founder of *L'Atelier* was not more than a step. I understood the meaning of life, I had in view the apostolate of equality and I commenced by preaching by example."

He associated with men like Perdiguier, ten years older than he but like him full of faith in equality and association. They tried to establish associations. Gilland was tireless in his efforts and his sacrifices. "More than ever I mean to stay a worker," he said. "I would insist on my idea all the more in order to prove to all vain egoists that work must be sanctified, that it uplifts all who love it and makes them independent." He struggled through misunderstandings and failures, very like Perdiguier in spirit—hating kings, sensing the approach of a revolution, believing in the religion of associations, hoping for peaceful methods to bring the moral happiness which was his dream, and the day of Equality of which he spoke as the "daughter of Christ". A man of great piety and gentleness, with big streaks of sentimentality running through him as his sometimes excruciatingly moral tales and verse show; but a personality of beautiful courage, one to win workmen, and an editor of vision and power.

He was nominated for the Assembly after February 1848, but defeated, for the reaction used absurd tales to discredit him. They feared him, as Sand says, "a man of progress, a man of the people." He was living peacefully in Paris when the June insurrection broke

out. He could not fight in it or against it; he fled to Lizy to leave his wife and children with Magu, whose daughter he had married. There he was arrested by mad troops on no charge at all and held in prison quite unjustly, not knowing why. Here he wrote a volume of stories which was published in 1849, *Les Conteurs Ouvriers*. The next year he was elected to the Legislative Assembly. Again later he was accused before the courts for some passages in a new book, *Les Contrasts sociaux*. His paper was suppressed. But to the end of his life, even though he was suffering fatally with consumption he kept preaching education, peaceful organization, moral soundness.

Poverty, almost inevitable debasement accompanying it, a terrible sense of a cruel world, for himself loneliness because he was misunderstood, for the many loneliness because of the too frequent and appallingly early deaths of those near to them, no wonder Gilland found sorrow at the center of the life of the people around him. His experience in this way was more nearly like the English Thomas Cooper's than that of most of the French writers. He did not have the drollery of Magu with which to meet it, or the buoyancy of Perdiguier, or the wit and gaiety of Jasmin. But he had won strength not to be overcome, a man of perfectly dependable personal integrity, robust belief in work and will to excellence in workmanship; and he had faith in the people. He was one of those strong, kind men whom the people could trust.

Like Gilland, the baker-poet, Jean Reboul, found sorrow the keynote of life. His first volume of verse was published in 1836 with the help of Lamartine, and in spite of laxities of form was praised by Hugo and Vigny. It was in purely romantic style. Béranger scorned it and told the poet to go back to his ovens. But about 1838 a change came over Reboul. He began to be concerned with larger movements than personal sorrow, and his piercing sincerity faced underlying motives in both people and kings.

He was born in the old Roman town of Nîmes where he lived the rest of his life. His childhood was influenced by the ideals of his father, a poor but scrupulously honest locksmith, a devout Catholic and Royalist. It was also full of sadness for soon his father was very ill and his mother then always in tears. One day, unable to bear it any longer, he went into the old Roman amphitheater to sit in the sun. He fell asleep and dreamed that his father was dead and his mother in despair; but into the midst of the horror

descended the angel of poetry from the sky. He awoke filled with the spirit of song, his "genius," as he says, "born from his tears." He early married a frail, timid girl who died two months afterward, and he was plunged into still deeper sorrow, sorrow that he wrote in the *Elégie* in his *Poésie Nouvelle*. Then he set up his baker's shop and married again, for he needed a wife to help tend the shop and to keep house. Her death twelve years later again left him desolate. It is not surprising that his verse is mournful. The first poem to bring him recognition, *L'Ange et l'Enfant* was written out of these experiences. It was published in 1828 in the *Quotidienne* and applauded by many of the best writers.

But Reboul had no idea of devoting himself to poetry altogether, nor was he misled by applause. He refused to give up his work as a baker, and only his leisure hours from two o'clock in the afternoon were given over to poetry. In the evening he read to his friends what he had written. They tried in vain to get him to publish some of his verse, but it was only when Lamartine was in Nîmes and the two poets passed days together among the ancient monuments of the town that his reluctance was overcome. Then political storms interferred and difficulties made by the printers until it was 1836 when his first volume appeared.

Gradually a change came over his poetry. He had been shaken by the fall of the old monarchy; he was oppressed more and more by the growing hostility to the Church and hatred of old French traditions. He asked himself what place there could be for plaintive elegies when society itself was threatened. It was a change as marked as that in Cooper when he realized that he must no longer gather knowledge for himself alone, but must take his part with the Chartists. Reboul decided that poetry should be no longer an aim of itself, but an instrument for a larger good. Much later, in 1852, he wrote to a younger colleague the principle which he began at this point to apply: "Let us leave to literary gamblers 'art for art's sake'; these blind men are far from suspecting that this destestable axiom carries within it the death of all Poetry. We, who know it, pray God that we may remain Christian in order not to cease being poets. I do not claim that all pieces of poetry should be sermons; but I say that in all spirit must be dominant, and I take this word in its highest meaning."

He left his elegies, his pleasing pictures of bronzed toreadors, of

Aigues-Mortes, of the landscape of the Pont du Nord. Henceforth his tone was austere in its defense of monarchy and the Church. More and more he wrote philosophical "epistles" in a heavy verse like that of Corneille and with the tone of a solemn old Roman who scorns all weakness, who lashes the people for their godlessness and kings for their cowardice, and who above all demands stern uprightness of living. *Aux Rois, Du Système égalitaire* and *La Colère de Dieu* storm in his customary rhymed alexandrines. A letter to Guizot scores the vagueness with which the word liberty is used.

In order to understand his political outlook one must remember that even to this day the south of France is strongly monarchical and Catholic. The people of Languedoc and Provençe always identified the glory of France with their kings, and though they protested loudly if royal authority interferred with them, the moment that authority was altogether threatened, they supported it. Reboul had been brought up among the simple poor of Nîmes, many of whom had traced a *fleur de lys* in charcoal on their walls and who privately talked of the time when the rightful king should return to the throne. The poet never lost his loyalty. But he demanded justice too.

In 1848 the citizens of Nîmes elected him to the Assembly though he was more of a poet than a politician. It shows the respect the people felt for knowledge. One of his friends writes of him, "He arrived then in the midst of this desert (Paris) and I can see him yet in the garden of a friend's house with the noise of a fusillade or a drum in the distance, his fine brow bent toward the ground, his lips now drawn with anxiety, now curled with irony, asking me what he had come to do in this noisy galley." He was both horrified and attracted by the revolution, for he saw at once the vast perspective opened for humanity and the stupid violences and conflicts of ideas among utopians, communists, republicans and what not. He disapproved of the dissolution of the Assembly, but when he went home, he made no effort to be sent to the Legislative Assembly which followed it. He explained to the people that though he was glad to have served them, he was also glad to be at home again and to devote himself to study.

The rest of his life was uneventful—he was a baker; he was engaged with a young Provençal worker, Roumanille, in a movement to encourage Provençal poetry and was busily collecting local poems on Noel. Jasmin's influence in writing Gascon appears here.

In the main, his study and his writing have nothing about them to be identified as specially those of a working man. He wrote several tragedies in the classical form, one of which was set in the time of Charles Martel and Charlemagne, the other of which was an Antigone well enough conceived to have been accepted by the reading committee of the Théâtre Français in 1844. His main interest for us here is as a type of keen mentality and earnestness among workers, piercing through phrases of equality and new worlds, as a man who succeeded in making an admirable combination of a trade with poetry—one of the varied expressions of the new, self-educated workman giving France hope in her plain people.

His long poem *A un jeune Poète* explains his poetical ideal in full. It is rich in allusions to Horace and classical mythology; it is full of admiration for the "great century" and urges careful study of Corneille, Racine and Molière. It advises careful polish of verse, but not too much, for the important thing is to be natural. The first necessity is to have depth of thought and from that the form which is suited to the thought, will come of itself. The aim of poetry is to inspire virtue. Today the form most suited to this aim is high satire, not comedy. The heroic epic is the highest work, and of such grandeur that a whole life is little enough time for its accomplishment. It is this grandeur which qualifies Reboul's own spirit. Lamartine said of him, "I have read admirable lines by him and scenes of ancient tragedy which breathe the male severity of the Roman genius." This is the keynote of the poetry of the baker of Nîmes.

His companion poet of the people, Jasmin, commented on the quality of his verse in more fanciful fashion. Jasmin on one of his many journeys for recitation arrived at Nîmes one day, early in 1847, and among other poems recited an impromptu on *Nîmes and Jean Reboul* which brought down the house. Reboul was in the audience, and the two poets embraced effusively to the delight of the assembled multitude. Jasmin had sung of the arena of the town so famous from days of Roman glory when grand ladies and proud soldiers watched gladiatorial combats, and then with one of his graceful pictures he turned to what he liked better—the little shop where he had that day "found his twin brother" making "bread for the body" and "his Muse nourishing the soul with money".

For an hour, my Muse
Wishes to return there again,
For lady and shepherdess,
They have promised to agree.
To the one the capitals,
The grand things of today,
Organs and cathedrals
And the great royal way.
And for the other the little parish church,
The meadows, the little byeways,
The cottage, the bagpipe
And sometimes the nightingales.

The sunny poet of Agen had exactly caught the difference between him and the other workman of the south. It is a pleasing scene full of suggestion of the happiness and encouragement these workers could get from each other as more and more of them wrote. It was little wonder that the eager reformers of the north heralded them as their greatest argument to their comrades and to more fortunate classes.

Reboul was read by the people of the south and in Paris. Even today he keeps his appeal. Only recently the autobiography of Henry Fabre, the naturalist, a man belonging by blood to the workers too, has told how, when he was a youth struggling for schooling and peddling lemons in the market of Montpellier or "enrolled with a company of workmen constructing a railroad between Beaucaire and Nimes", he dined on a few grapes in order to buy a copy of Reboul's poems, and forgot his hunger in reciting them—the tribute of a man of the people across years to the man of the people.

Meanwhile Jasmin had taken Paris by storm in his visit there in 1842. The appearance of a volume of Saint Simonian verse the year before along with some of the other volumes of workers had precipitated heated discussions of the place of the proletariat in art. Then Jasmin appeared. His volumes of poetry had already gone into several editions; he had been hailed by Nodier with high praise; he had even attracted the attention of English journals, the *Athenaeum* of November 1842 announcing him as a "genius of the first order"; his tale of *The Blind Girl of Castel-Cuillé* had been translated into English, Spanish and Italian. With their eyes on Burns, the French now thought that they had a great man from the people. "Let us know how to recognize him without prudery," wrote Sainte Beuve. "He is not a farm-hand or a shepherd; he is

a barber of Agen . . . of that trade dear to Gil Blas and Figaro." This was the man who now found himself in demand everywhere from the time he recited *The Blind Girl* in Thierry's salon. He was even received by the king. But all this adulation could not disturb his worker's spirit. He was glad to go back to Agen where he could be happy with his trade and the simple folk of his town, for fundamentally he belonged to them, and he was far too well balanced to be lost in a whirl of city glory. The workmen of Paris always included him in their group of poets. His origin was theirs; he loved his trade; he knew the grandeur of the people as only a man of the people can.

He has himself given the story of his youth in *Mous Soubenirs,* written in 1830 and one of the most delightful of all the many autobiographies which are the source of most of our knowledge of these men. "Old and broken, the other century had only a couple of years to pass on the earth, when in a corner of an old street, in a house where more than one rat dwelt, on *Mardi-gras,* behind the door, at the hour when they toss pancakes,[1] of a humpbacked father and a lame mother was born a child. That child was I." So he begins a tale of exquisite tact, combining gay raillery of himself with profound and dignified sadness. When a prince was born, a cannon saluted the event, but he was saluted only by the uproar of the "charivari" in which his disorderly tailor father was taking part. His mother made heroic efforts to make up for her husband's lack of trade by spinning and taking in washing. It was she who was determined to give her son a chance to go to school, she who sacrificed everything, though the carefree lad, not yet realizing their position, got himself into many a scrape which might have discouraged her. Then his much loved grandfather hung up his begging wallet on a nail in their one room and died in a hospital for the poor, and for the first time young Jasmin really looked at their miserable dwelling. The bitterness of poverty stung him. Was this what life meant then? But his Gascon gaiety could not be crushed nor his love of the plain folk, and his pride in belonging to them.

At sixteen, when he was apprenticed to a barber, he began the

[1] An allusion to a folk custom of *Mardi-gras* when people try to see who can best toss pancakes. In Brittany there is a lively folk-song about it.

experience of so many of the workers—long days of work and late evenings spent in reading and writing. He pleased his master's customers no less for the wit of his conversation and his talent for recitation than for his skill in his work. Presently he set up in business for himself and won considerable success, all the time rhyming in his leisure. He married a poor girl who was at first quite out of sympathy with his rhyming propensities and felt that his use of curl-papers as copy-books was entirely unsuitable. But later she was convinced of his rightness and became his loyal helper. Her knowledge of the Gascon dialect, the language of the people, was invaluable when he was trying to get it into written form. As fast as he made his poems, he recited them to an admiring local audience. His reputation grew apace until more and more he was called upon for entertainments. In 1835 he made a volume of his verse and with his unique touch of drollery and sense of fitness published it with the title, *Curl Papers*. It brought him enough money to buy a tiny house, where he lived contentedly the rest of his life. A visitor to the "poet of Agen" would be sure to find him in his front shop and have a chance to listen to a torrential discourse on lyric poetry or the language of the people which would accompany the deft operations of the barber.

Jasmin's feeling as a worker was not class-consciousness in the political sense. When he was called upon by the citizens of Agen to be a candidate for the Assembly in 1848, he said that affairs of state were much too confused for him to pretend to unravel them. His life carried out the advice of a great writer given him at an early point in his career, not to waste time at the feasts of the lazy and above all not to occupy himself with politics, for that was not his function as poet. His philosophy of living was summed up in a letter to a rich wine-merchant of Toulouse who had advised him to go to Paris to live: "You too, without regard to troubling my days and my nights, have written to ask me to carry my guitar and my dressing-comb to the great city of kings, because there, you say, my poetical humor and my well-known verses will bring torrents of crowns into my purse. Oh, you may well boast to me of this shower of gold and its clinking stream. You only make me cry, 'Honor is but smoke, glory is but glory, and money is only money!' I ask you in no craven spirit, is money the only thing for a man to seek who feels in his heart the least spark of poetry? In my town

where everyone works, leave me as I am. Every summer happier than a king I lay up my small provision for the winter and then I sing like a gold-finch under the shade of a poplar or an ash tree, only too happy to grow gray in the land which gave me birth.. . . To sing of joyous poverty, one must be joyful and poor. I am satisfied with my rye-bread and the cool water from my fountain."

There speaks the real poet of the people. In writing he had begun by imitating Boileau and other classical writers; but it was only when he wrote in Gascon that he found his real gift. It was no easy task to write this, for it did not exist in written form and though he had heard it always at home, it was necessary that he should study it carefully. He went to market-places, he made excursions into the country, he conversed with farmers, laborers and especially the old women who told him ancient legends while they were spinning. He made his own dictionary and finally formed a written language as a medium for his verse. Often he was urged to give up writing in it; over and over again people insisted that if he would write in French, he would be read and loved by all France. But he only answered, "I cannot desert my mother tongue. It preserves the folklore of the district, it is the language of the poor, of the laborer, the shepherd, the farmer and the grape-gatherer, of boys and girls, of brides and bride-grooms. The people love to hear my songs in their native dialect. You have enough poetry in classical French; leave me to please my compatriots in the dialect which they love." He sings long ballads founded on local legends, impressive in their simple passion and told with dramatic power and pictures of exquisite freshness.

L'Aveugle de Castel Cuglier is the tragedy of a poor girl who loved a village lad, who was deserted by him when she had been blinded by small-pox, who attended his wedding to another and there died. *Franconnette,* considered by most people his masterpiece, another story of love, if founded on traditions of the sixteenth century and the Huguenot and Catholic wars. Marcel, a soldier of Montluc the Catholic terror, and Pascal, the village blacksmith, loved Franconnette, a gay flirt who played with both of them until she finally learned to appreciate the steady workman, faithful to her even through the days when strange rumors circulated about her and the village ostracized her as a witch. Lively pictures of the annual fête of reeling thread, of the shepherds pruning their vines badly for

thought of her, of the trials of poverty in the family of the poor smith, make this more clearly a poem of the plain people than the first. This is even more true of *Maltro, l'Innoucento* with its pictures of its heroine's toil and the village interest in her story, and of *La Semaine d'un Fils,* a story of a mason's tragedy, with its misery and the loneliness of the poor. This tale was dedicated to Lamartine, who wrote to Jasmin in April 1849, "Your poem has made us weep. You are the only epic writer of our time, the sensitive and pathetic Homer of the proletariat. Others sing, but you feel."

It is true that Jasmin has written the large, simple emotions that Béranger defined as conceptions suitable for the poetry of the people and that Lamartine suggested in his preface to *Jocelyn,* but the appellation "Homer of the proletariat" is certainly extravagant. With more justice he has been called the French Burns because of his origin, his inspiration from peasants and their surroundings, and his use of dialect. But the differences between the two are fundamental. Jasmin may make his hearers weep, as Lamartine says and as records show he often did when he recited, but his sadness is not the sadness of Burns. He went through life radiant, full of activity to relieve miseries, full of faith and love where Burns never did succeed in making terms with life. Jasmin's verse is of the south where no line seems harsh and even misery is not so cruel; Burns is full of the spirit of the north, and the wildness of Tam O'Shanter's night marks the difference. It marks another too: in depth of passion, Burns is far greater than Jasmin. The fierce vigor and burning imagery of *Scots Wha Hae* is much stronger than anything in Jasmin's work. But one loves the gentleness and lightness of touch of the poet who gives a sense of harmony between dreams and life. The pathos of the inner heart of the people is there, but seen through the limpid light of the south.

Though he stood apart from the political struggles of the time, he did not regard the sufferings of other workers with detachment. His talents were poured out without stint for the good of all the needy. The absence of adequate public relief in France meant that distress of the farmers from floods or droughts and of artisans from irregularities of employment had to be alleviated largely by private means. It was Jasmin's custom to recite his poems for the relief of such suffering. "Nothing could make the life of the troubadours

of ancient times better understood," wrote a critic in the *Revue des deux Mondes* in 1846. "But there is a difference between Jasmin and that old time pilgrim who sometimes fanned the flames of war in the feudal manors, called the knights to combat, sang of pleasure and charmed the courts of the Midi with verses of love. Times have changed; Jasmin is the son of his time; he gives his poetry a more serious end, one more in harmony with this epoch, and in arousing the southern public to passion by the interest of his lively composition, he turns the sympathy which he gets to benefit every kind of misery. Jasmin is in truth the 'troubadour of charity'."[1] He usually walked to the towns to which he was invited, for he wanted to waste none of the money on railroad or carriage fare which ought to go to the needy. Usually he was met at the city gates and escorted in triumph through the streets by rejoicing crowds. For thirty years he journeyed in this way everywhere through the south of France and indeed made his last trip just before his death when he should have been in bed. It was not surprising that in 1852 he received the Prix Montyon and certainly the merit of his poetry deserved the crown of the Academy in the same year. In the next year he was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honor at the same time as Balzac and Musset. But none of these honors confused him or changed him. He was ever the barber of Agen. "In my town where every one works, leave me as I am."

As a poet of the people, he has summed up their poetical gift and their artistic problem in a letter to Sainte Beuve (1851): "I do not understand and I cannot express anything but the verve and simplicity of action. I always see the magnificent regiment of others on parade on Sundays filing before Monsieur the Prefect; it is regular, it is radiant, it is beautiful to the eye, but it is mechanical, symmetrical life which is asleep. My own little battalion is not so beautiful, so radiant perhaps, but it belongs to war and there all is simple, alive, full of vim and spontaneity . . .

" . . . In 1834 a fire burst out in the night in Agen; a young boy of the people well-endowed but mannered and full of exaggerations as a result of half education, witnessed a heart-breaking scene; and when some friends and I arrived on the spot, quivering with the emotion of it still, he told it to us. I shall never forget it in my life: he made us tremble . . . he made us weep . . . it

[1] Charles Mazade in *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1 décembre 1846.

was Corneille! it was Talma! The next day I spoke of this metamorphosis in an intelligent family. They asked him to tell it again. But the fever of the emotion was extinguished; he was a phrase-maker, mannered, exaggerated, in short he willed to make his story and he did not make it. Then I understoood that speaking and acting in our moments of emotion and fever, we are all laconic and eloquent, full of verve and action, real poets in sum when we do not dream of it; and I understand also that a Muse could arrive at all that consciously by force of work and patience. There is the simple explanation of all that I produce either in works or entertainments."

Simplicity of the lives of the people, Jasmin had found the secret, and language growing out of that. But his was no slipshod verse turned off quickly. He polished and repolished. *Franconnette* took him two years. There is a story of how a poet, Peyrottes, challenged him to public competition in verse and Jasmin refused it indignantly, saying that he would not degrade his gift of poetry with less than the perfect. Mastery of form makes his poetry last. It has gone into many editions—the last in 1888 with a fine French translation along with it.

Meanwhile in 1842, the very year that Jasmin was receiving ovations in Paris, *Les Marines* was published, the first volume of another southern workman, one who belonged to a new generation. It came to the notice of George Sand, who was sure that she had found in Charles Ponçy, its author, the new poet of the people. Ponçy had it in him to end in the futility of Moreau with less of Moreau's authentic gift of poetry. But he was blessed by living in the Midi; he had more of the true workman's spirit; and the friendship of George Sand was potent in holding him to the course which made him a happy expression of his time.

Born at Toulon in 1821, he played in the streets and the fields until he was nine—a carefree life, if poor, like that of other southern poets. In preparation for his first communion he was exposed to a year and a half of religious education at an *école mutuelle*, and then to some months at the school of the commune. At nine he went to work in the service of masons, and he belonged to this trade the rest of his life. He liked it, tearing down old buildings, putting up new ones, swinging on a scaffolding high above the roofs and out there—the sea, blue Mediterranean shining in the sunlight, and the soft wind blowing. He loved a poor working girl and eventually married her.

He wrote fanciful poems about the sea and sailors, often graceful, often vivid with the particular color of Toulon. He was a romantic at heart. Poems to *Byron, To the Harp of Ossian, Night Thoughts* show influences that might easily have swept him into that vague longing for the infinite which was Moreau's undoing. Happily his first volume met with success—workers appreciated it; George Sand hailed him as a real poet and persuaded various people to write articles about him. She swooped upon the most original poem in it, a lament to his broken trowel, and urged him to write more and more about his work. "My child, you are a great poet, the most inspired and best endowed of all the fine proletarian poets whom we have seen rise of late. You can be the greatest poet of France some time if vanity which kills our bourgeois poets, does not approach your noble heart and if you keep that precious treasure of love, pride and goodness which gives you genius.

"Take care, noble child of the people! You have a mission greater perhaps than you think. Resist, suffer, endure misery, obscurity if it must be, rather than abandon the sacred cause of your brothers. It is the cause of humanity, it is the safety of the future, for which God has ordained that you should work in giving you so strong and so brilliant a mind."[1]

She urged that he had a serious problem before him to "reconcile his picturesque and artistic feeling with a human and moral feeling." He had been successful whenever he spoke of his work and that was because one is interested not only in his single personality, but because one is also interested in the worker. "Men are not really interested in a man except as he is interested in humanity. His suffering finds no sympathy or interest except as it is undergone for humanity. And the humanity that suffers is not we, men of letters; it is not I, who know neither hunger nor misery; it is not even you who will find in your glory and the gratitude of your brothers a high recompense for your personal ills; it is the people, the ignorant people, the abandoned people full of stormy passions which some arouse in a wrong direction or which they trample without respect for the force which God has not given for nothing. It is the people delivered to all the ills of the body and of the soul without priest of a true religion, without compassion or respect on

[1] Sand, *Corresponrance*, vol. I, 27 avril 1842.

the part of the enlightened classes who would themselves deserve to fall back into the condition of brutes were not God all pity, all patience and all pardon."[1]

When he sent her a poem written to Juana, the Spanish maiden, and other fantastic beauties in good romantic style, she flashed fire at him: "Are you a bourgeois poet or a proletarian poet? If you are the former, you can sing all the voluptuousness and all the sirens in the world without ever having known a single one. You can sup, in verse, with the most delicious *houris* or with the grandest women of the town without leaving the corner of your fireside and without other beauties than the nose of your porter. These gentlemen do so and only rhyme the better. But if you are a child of the people, and the poet of the people, you should not leave the chaste bosom of Desirèe to run after Indian dancers and to sing about their voluptuous arms.

"I find there a breach in the dignity of your rôle. The poet of the people has lessons of virtue to give to our corrupted classes and if he is not more austere, more pure and more truly a lover of good than our poets, he is merely their imitator, their ape, their inferior. For it is not only the art of arranging words which makes a great poet: that is the accessory, it is the effect of a cause. The cause must be a great feeling, an immense and serious love of virtue, of all the virtues; a morality to stand all tests, in sum a superiority of soul and of princples which breathe in his verse at every stroke, and which make the inexperience of the artist pardonable because of the real grandeur of the individual. It seems to me that sometimes you scatter your soul or at least your muse to all the winds . . .

"If you want to be a real poet, be a saint! and when your heart is sanctified, you will see how your mind will inspire you."[2]

Ponçy followed her advice. He kept to his work and his family. His next volume, *Le Chantier,* published in 1844, was full of aspiration deepened by the fact that since *Les Marines* he had faced sorrow for the death of his mother and then of his child in 1843, and had bitterly questioned the meaning of evil and tragedy in life until he finally arrived at the peace of faith. His volume is still romantic on the whole, made up largely of poems like *Butterfly, The Path of*

[1] *Ibid.*, 23 juin 1842.

[2] Sand, *Correspondance,* vol. II, 21 janvier 1843.

the Sky, The Mason and the Bird, of love poems of the usual superlatives about the lady's beauty and angelic qualities, laments over the sadness of life after the death of his mother and his child, a long tale called *The Laundress at Evening,* in which against a background of wild waterfall and murmuring night-forest written in the spirit of Lamartine, the poet's "taciturn soul" listens to the toiler's lament over her dead lover and the tragedy of never being able to look forward to marriage; and then he watches her little lantern going to the tiny cottage where her family is sleeping. But he was also more alive to the miseries of workers around him and a new poignancy crept into his verse. Steadily he refused to be lionized by middle class people delighted with his picturesquesness: "I have no right to such pleasures in the face of my brother's destiny. I am sleepy at night when you are just awake, for I have toiled all day. Besides some of you would note that plaster follows my steps and that I am not dressed exactly right. The worker must stay where he is."

Sunny, poignant years passed for him, years of awareness of new movements—the workers must unite; they must study. He himself studied philosophies of society. He proudly received Arago, the great republican. He was filled with the ardor of the thinkers in Paris. But he would not go to Paris. No indeed. Toulon, the beautiful, Toulon of the sea, Toulon of the people he knew and loved, held him. He studied his verse form, he prided himself on his skill as a mason, he knew his "brother-workmen". Once he thought he was in love with Sand, but she understood how to rebuke him. He and his wife later visited her. They corresponded steadily through years, the letters of both full of the intimate details of their lives and of literary discussion.

It was Sand who suggested to him his next volume, *Chansons de Chaque Métier,* which he wrote during the forties and published finally in 1850. It and his *Bouquet de Marquerites* of 1852 were among the last expressions of that early consciousness of the workers. Sand's letter to him about her dream of such a volume might well serve as a sort of Bible to all aspiring worker poets, for it sends him to study and sing of the nobility of toil and the suffering from it because of wrong social direction; it insists on the depth of knowledge and sympathy such a poet must have—indeed he needs to belong to the very people of whom he is singing; it warns him

that he must give up striving for elaboration and learn simplicity, simplicity, the most difficult thing in the world.[1]

In spite of Sand's faith that he would be the great new poet of the people, Ponçy never was. He had not the genius in the first place. He never triumphed over the prevailing literary mode of his time, and fanciful imagery of romantic poets loads verse about workers which should have been as direct as they. It was Pierre Dupont, born in the same year as Ponçy and receiving recognition in Paris in the same year that Ponçy's first volume appeared, who became the people's poet of the period.

Dupont's father was a blacksmith of Lyons and his mother one of the strong women of the people who saw to it that her son was started with sound sense based on the Bible. Both of them died when he was small, and his godfather, a priest of a small village, Rochetaillée-on-the-Sâone, took him to bring him up as a priest. He passed many happy days helping with the mass in the morning, and the rest of the time wandering in the fields and woods and along the banks of the Sâone, barefooted, bareheaded, romping with the children of peasants, hunters, woodmen, with shepherd boys and goose-girls, so learning from his early boyhood to know plain country folk and their songs, for the people of the region around Lyons love song. They love nature too, and have a mystical sense about it. This was in Dupont's blood.

When he was about ten years old, he was sent to a small seminary at L'Argentières—a lad of rollicking spirits and keen mind. He proved disconcerting to his masters at first, for his classical studies so enraptured him with the notion of the Greek gods that he set up the worship of them in the garden. But he took high honors in his studies too. On a visit to his grandfather in Provins he came to know the poetry of Hegesippe Moreau who had not yet died wretchedly in Paris and who was stirring the little village of his birth. Dupont later wrote of this influence, "I passed from the naive and rather vague education of the old priest to the reading of this sweet master of suffering who made me love nature, love and liberty." What dreams of poetry began to stir in him! They grew stronger and stronger. He would be a writer, not a priest.

At sixteen he announced this decision to his godfather, who was disappointed and horrified. He gave the recalcitrant Pierre the

[1] Sand, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 12 septembre 1844.

choice of going back to the seminary and becoming a priest or of becoming a silk weaver. He chose the latter and was bound as an apprentice for five years to a weaver of Lyons. But the misery of the tall dark houses of Lyons, the hours from before dawn till late at night and the ceaseless work were a torture to him. He ran away after five days. Then he found work with a notary, but the monotony of that seemed to him no better. He tried clerking in a bank, fortunately for a man of understanding and sympathy, able to enjoy reading the poems of his young assistant, and sometimes to laugh if they were scribbled in the books instead of accounts. But some exploits in love presently led the would-be poet to leave Lyons altogether. Filled with dreams of fame and armed with some stories that he had written, he braved Paris as Moreau had done and as Cooper had braved London.

Bitter disappointment was his first reward. He called on Hugo, but Hugo did not receive him or notice the verse he wrote on his calling card. He tried in vain to sell his stories. Misery and want followed. Finally he again tried work in a bank for eight months; then he tried being a tutor. No good. How he hated steady, grinding work. He visited his relative in Provins where he had a chance to finish his poem *Les deux Anges*. Lebrun, who had tried to help Moreau, now came to the rescue of Dupont. Through his influence the poem was sold; then in 1842, again through his influence, it was crowned by the Academy. He got him work connected with the Dictionary of the Academy, and so at last the poet was started in Paris.

Started on work that would help his writing, for his task was to write out the history of words and their exact definitions. Day after day he heard discussions of the Academy where Hugo and Cousin disputed old rules of grammar, or new shades of meaning in words, and he himself gained a feeling for exactness in language that most poets from the people lacked entirely. His reading now became wider—the Latin classics, translations of English, German and Italian masterpieces. But none of these equalled the influence of Balzac whom he had studied passionately at the time when he was a bank clerk. Probably no contemporary literary influence could have been more fortunate, for the exactness, the fearless realism and irony, the thoroughly modern feeling of Balzac balanced Dupont's own contemplative and sentimental streaks, reinforced his

natural observation and folk-realism. Combined with his love of the people because he was one of them, it helped to make his expression something new in French literature. About this time he fell in with Gounod and began another fortunate relationship, for Gounod was astonished and delighted with the music that Dupont was composing right out of his head with no previous musical training—he said he found his tunes by listening to nature. They were often faulty from the point of view of the laws of music, but Gounod was sure that here was a talent of unusual order. He made Dupont promise to sing him every new song that it might not be lost.

The poet kept his promise and one day moved the great composer so deeply with a new song that he could not write it down the first time it was sung. This was *Les Boeufs*. The story goes that Dupont had been walking as usual in the morning out by the gate of the city when he saw a herd of steers being driven to the slaughter-house. He shuddered. He thought of home and the peasants near Lyons who loved their animals. And he made his song. Soon it was sung at the Théâtre des Variétés where it won instant popularity. Everywhere people caught it up, pianos played it, literary men praised it. Five other songs followed at once, all about people of the country and full of the very flavor of their life—their sincerity, their rustic language. Sainte Beuve commented that this kind of song was similar to the idyll that George Sand was making popular at the moment in *François le Champi*. But Dupont avoided idealization of the peasants more than Sand. The first two collections of his songs were entirely on these subjects—*Paysans,* published in 1846, and *Chants rustiques*.

From 1843 he was a member of the group of young writers who were ready to revolt from the romanticism of the older generation —Hugo, Sand and the rest. Champfleury, also a worshipper of Balzac and full of interest in folk-humor, Baudelaire, Gautier, De Banville and others met night after night in gay conversation, now on the disputes Dupont had heard at the Academy, now on new literature. Dupont was there usually, a healthy Hercules with a red beard, a head strong enough to stand out-drinking any of the rest, a distinctly countrified air, a radiant smile and incomparable spontaneity and gaiety in talk and song. Meanwhile until 1849 he went around singing his songs in cafés—his strong, ringing voice chanting his lines in recitative, rapid and full of verve, his gestures and ex-

pression bringing out the slightest nuance, the vitality of him sweeping the audience into storms of delight. In 1848 the workers had turned a room which was once a stable for riding-horses into the Hall for the Fraternity of the Faubourg Saint Denis, and here at their celebrations, Dupont sang each new song.

He was not like Perdiguier one of the leaders to try to reform the people. But he was of the people in spirit, and so as those years of their misery and the gathering forces of revolution beat upon him, he seemed like their own special instrument able better than any of the others to give back their sufferings and dreams in authentic music. One day in 1846 he went to Baudelaire with a song different from any he had made before. He was not quite sure whether it was a good one or not. "He sang me in that charming voice he had then," said Baudelaire, "the magnificent *Song of the Workers.*"[1] It was followed almost at once by the *Song of Bread.* The workers knew that he was theirs. They sang him everywhere. Song after song followed on almost every theme in the worker's heart at that time—sorrows, dreams, triumphs. He himself had no political intention. He was a singer, pure and simple. In 1851 his songs were gathered and published in *Le Muse populaire.* Copies were sold by thousands among the working people. By 1861 it had run into the sixth edition. It was reviewed in England. Several songs were translated into English and appeared in workmen's pamphlets of songs used at their meetings. In Germany his social and political songs won him some popularity: A collection of these appeared in Hamburg in 1851; in 1864 a collection of *French Workers' Writings* made by Adolf Stredtmann in Hamburg gave a large place to him.

It was hoped that he would be assigned the task of studying and collecting French folk-songs when in 1852 the French government signed a decree authorizing such a study. No one would have been better fitted for it. But his fate was quite other. With the *coup d'état* he was condemned to banishment in Algiers for seven years. A high official in the government who loved his bucolic poetry, succeeded in getting this annulled and Dupont returned to Lyons where he lived with his brother, a silk manufacturer, and found again as in his early days, happy companionship with peasants, woodsmen, river-boatmen and silk-weavers. No bitterness clung to him after

[1] Baudelaire, *Reflexions sur mes Contemporains.*

the disillusions of the revolution. He still had faith in the people to match Perdiguier's or Gilland's. He still dreamed of universal peace and a new civilization. Happily he died in 1870 just before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war. But the war clouds were heavy, and the death of the singer who had held Paris spell-bound in 1850, was noted only by two Parisian papers, *Figaro* and the *Journal des Débats.*

His spirit was not essentially a violent one; but he had capacity for rejoicing when out of violence the people set up the triumphant republic. His contemplation and even sadness, a quality never altogether absent from the people's expression, had nothing of the old romanticism in them. He flashed irony over the luxurious debauchery of the idle rich and the evils of usury in a money-ridden society. He knew the misery of the poor. He had times of needing to escape from cities and find the repose of tranquil evenings under the stars. But he was free from the hatreds of modern life characteristic of so much of Balzac and of the half-romanticist and half-modernist Flabert. His spirit is one of unabashed contemplation of the modern world; it is the spirit of healthy activity. In it the workers' feeling of the forties finds full expression.

Faint colors, broken lines at first, these men's lives and writings in the decades from 1830-1850, making a pattern hardly noted in the main work of literature, but coloring it, turning it to different shapes and forgotten. It was the American Whitman who wove it whole and brilliantly. They did not know each other, those toilers of France and the prophet of America. But their patterns have strange, deep similarity. It was the new democracy—dark threads knotted into the warp, battles, death, machines; and woven over it terror and gladness, dreams of sunshine and sea, visions of free, strong comrades singing, realization of divinity in the man whose hands make life for nations; and the weavers at work with vigorous new joy in the discovery of themselves. Faint colors, broken lines at first, but as the shuttle of the years passed and repassed, the weavers saw their pattern, and they called all workers to come and weave it with more certain skill.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATION OF THE WORKER-WRITERS TO THOSE OF THE MAIN CURRENT

The workmen used varied literary forms to express the miseries of the people, to challenge the rich to help them, and the workers to free and educate themselves. They pictured the vast hopes of the new religion. They chanted their sense of dignity because they worked. They related tales out of the folk lore of the past. They sang the glories of new industry, aware of its potentialities for beauty under all the ugliness of its wrong use. Their moral sense was simple and stern, rooted in hard struggle with the actualities of getting a living, a struggle made bearable often enough only for some loyal affection companioning it. A chorus of new vitality seemed to be rising from the people. These were the days when middle class France was tiring of the first generation of romantics and was turning to dead and mediocre plays in the old classical form; and the young intellectuals, the Sainte Beuves and Flauberts, were moaning futilely over a tired and hopeless world. Against such a background the voices of the workers sounded with fresh poignancy, and it is not strange that many of the older romantics felt that they would bring some deep new reality to literature.

It seemed a logical development from the shift in social power since the seventeenth century. In a preface to a volume of worker's verse, one of the popular poets of the time, Mme. Amable Tastu, called attention to a "pleiade of poets of the people" and urged that "it is to the proletariat, to the people in the true sense of the word that now belongs the creative and primary role of poetry; up to the seventeenth century poetry and literature were exclusively the portion of the nobility; then it was the magistrature and the high bourgeoisie who made their entrance, then the middle class; at present it is the turn of the people. As a harmonious phrase in some work of Beethoven's goes through the orchestra repeated in turn by each instrument, so the gift of poetry passes through all the classes of society; it is because of this that poetry never dies, but is forever freshly renewed." Etienne Arago, more concerned with the

social import, announced, "These are preliminary and infallible signs of an approaching political emancipation against which pretended statesmen will stiffen their arms in vain." In his poem, *La Vile Multitude,* he urged eternal youth of the people.

It was Arago who discovered Ponçy and Lapointe, and who sent some of their verse to George Sand. She published it in *Le Revue Independante,* the new journal which she and Leroux started in 1841. The simultaneous appearance of this, of Rodrigues' volume of Saint Simonian workers' verse, and of the second edition of Perdiguier's *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* precipitated violent attacks in the conservative press.

Lerminier's article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* was the orthodox reaction: Since 1830 France has been educating the people, a good first step. But the people should not be encouraged to go into literature. They are sure to fail because of lack of skill and originality. Then will follow disastrous discouragement and many of them will even become suicides. Such a book as *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* dangerously encourages the idea of associations within the state like those of the Middle Ages, which the French Revolution broke down. Let the workers use their mutual benefit societies, but let us not create this dangerous caste spirit. This book was addressed to Chateaubriand, Béranger, Lamartine and Lamennais, who ought to have stopped its publication as a danger to the country. Besides, the songs of *compagnonnage* are naïve outbursts which should not be submitted to cold criticism. The people should not be allowed to think that they can reform themselves in isolation from the bourgeoisie. They should be taught that as evils come from above, they can be remedied only by those who have knowledge superior to theirs. Finally, the proletariat is intolerant of the criticism of the press which always goes with art and therefore should not enter the field. As for the collection of Rodrigues, there was every reason why it should have been welcomed, especially after 1830 because it appeared in the midst of a time of literary sterility when we should have been glad to receive these new poems. But there is no originality in them—they are mere imitations of Béranger, Lamartine and Hugo; they are written in bad style; and there is no inspiration. In this respect, they contrast strikingly with Robert Burns, who had real fire and whose songs were well known before they were printed. Agriculture is a great school and has given us

many great men, but how can a factory worker be a poet? The only possible way for a worker to write poetry is to give up earning his bread for the too precarious field of letters or to write in his leisure time when he is too tired to do any good writing. No, the whole effort to encourage this movement is misdirected. The reformers should teach the people the virtues of modesty, taste for an obscure life, will to abjure all vanity, perpetual immolation of all *amour-propre* for the common interest.

The republican and socialist groups saw both a political and a literary issue. They answered hotly that since the supreme end of humanity is the solution of great social problems and their practical solution appears under the form of universal education, organization of labor and guarantee of the means of existence to all, it is natural that the workers who are those most interested, should be the ones to speak of it. Moreover, from a literary point of view, it is unreasonable to expect that they should all at once speak a new word and not imitate anybody. Poets have always imitated, and if trained poets do so, why is it surprising that workers should? There are original poets, however, among this group—Magu for instance, and he has not left his trade for poetry. He is a real worker, and he is at the same time a real poet who has found his own words and a fresh, original message. The conservatives should not try to frighten these poets by telling them the difficulties of the literary career, nor need they worry lest they leave their trades, for the literary career is not sufficiently lucrative. It is George Sand who said all this in *Dialogues familières sur la poésie des prolétaires.* She believed that the appearance of this poetry indicated their ability to contribute to the progress of humanity, and that it was evidence of the perfectibility of man.

The workers' own attitude is suggested with all the flavor of Magu's directness and drollery in a letter to Sand apropos of this very article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes.* "If this article had appeared four years ago and it had come under my eyes, it would have discouraged me and I should have been kept from publishing my volume; what would have been the result? Quite the contrary of what M. Lerminier says, for then misery was overwhelming me, I had debts, two children as yet unable to earn their living, my eyes struck with ophthalmia did not permit me to work as much as before, I do not know where trouble and despair might have taken

me when some one advised me to gather my poetry and to publish it in a volume; I sent out a prospectus, and soon six hundred subscribers sent me orders for one or several copies; many wanted to pay five francs rather than four, several paid me ten, fifteen, even twenty. My two thousand copies ran out in less than a year; then I could pay my debts, give a position to my daughter, and to my youngest son, and joy returned to my heart. A second edition of this volume partly ran out; of the two thousand I have still about six hundred. My second volume is also selling well, but if an intelligent printer would take it upon himself to spread my work by sending some of it into the departments to the branch book-stores, and even to Paris . . . what is left of the two volumes would soon be placed. To return to what M. Leriminer says, that poetry brings no return, the good man is mistaken or he is abusing our innocence. Durand of Fontainebleau is much more comfortably off since he published his poetry . . . Lebreton at Rouen . . . has four hundred francs income from his literary stock, I two hundred.

"For my part, I have bought a little house which is not yet entirely paid for, but which I could pay for if I could sell the rest of my copies. Also, I am not going to give up poetry any more than my shuttle, and whatever M. Lerminier may say about it, I shall not kill myself nor my comrades either; I am not sorry to give him the lie.

"It is ambition which has urged us to write, he says further. Lie as far as I am concerned, and my friends already mentioned; we have written only because we could and not because we willed to; I did not show my poetry to anyone except certain pieces addressed to some friends who without my knowing about it, sent them to the paper at Meaux which set the college in a commotion. Professors were sent to inquire into the truth whether I was really a weaver, and all that happened by itself. Durand hid his carefully in a box among his tools; M. Michaux, solicitor of the King at Fontainebleau discovered them by chance. Almost the same thing happened to Lebreton.

"According to M. Lerminier, it is the lot of the middle class which is not a prey to misery or the ignorance which chains the flight of thought in the working classes, to see everything and say everything, etc. That is very flattering for that class, but it doesn't keep

us from disputing this monopoly and perhaps we shall do it to advantage, especially with supporters like you and your collaborators . . ."[1]

We have already seen how this proud claim to a place in the world of beauty was a step in the development of class consciousness and to the worker's finding life worth while. But Magu had put his finger on the importance of the fact that these writers of his class met with encouragement from the well-known artists of their time. Moreau had died in despair at being unrecognized. The generation following him was more fortunate. Magu says himself that if an article like M. Lerminier's had come to him earlier, it would have discouraged him from trying. As it was, he had found Sand as many another of them did, or Arago or Béranger or Lamartine, or even Chateaubriand.

A network of forces had combined to make these writers of the main current of romanticism herald workers' poetry as a manifestation of the dawn of a new day for civilization, or indeed realize that they existed at all. Hatred of the bourgeosie, a new religious outburst under the influence of Lamennais and the Saint Simonians, a cult of the people going back to Rousseau and the Great Revolution, and joining a new cult of the Revolution reaching its height in 1847 were woven and interwoven over the warp of social conditions—misery of the workers, vast wealth for the few. The first literary interest in the "man of the people" had appeeared in the works of the generation of 1830 as a result of frenzied hatred of the bourgeoisie. Piety and subservience to priests in the court of a bourgeois king who was really a protestant at heart; bankers' receptions with quantities of wine and food served in huge rooms blatant in gold and silver decorations; extravagant sports and club fashions from England, the despised land of shop-keepers; lavish honors for a millionaire thief who could manipulate vast affairs on the stock exchange and then damn crimes among the starving workers; rich debauchees prating of family virtue; bargainers with any party which would increase their power, discanting on loyalty to the state—how the writers detested the complacent hypocrisy of it all. Crudeness, ugliness, hard materialism of the new industrial society, taste for the commonplace in art drove them to escape by playing their imaginations around the gorgeousness of the Orient or the

[1] See Karenine, *George Sand*, vol. III, pp. 312 *seq.*

vivid, passionate life of the Middle Ages. Any wildness of primitive passion that would shock the good middle class hypocrites delighted them especially. Peasant wars of the time of Charles IX, tragedy of the fifteenth century, the passions of a woman in revolt against the institutions of society—the novelists searched the whole field of history and their own times for passion. They looked to the classes of society that had hitherto found no place in literature—the woman of the streets, criminals and then the noble man of the people. Hugo's Ruy Blas, a servant, comes to rule the state; Sand's heroine Valentine loves the low born Benedict, who is so noble that he lifts her with the infinite and beautiful dreams of his soul. Under a different impulse the two most modern novelists, Stendhal and Balzac, wrote of the ambitious man of the people—Julien, of *Le Rouge et le Noir,* brilliant, determined to rise to a position of power; Rastignac, still keeping some of the integrity of his simple country family but striving to play the game of high Parisian society. These were realistic enough, the products of the materialism of the age, but they were exceptions.

Fundamentally the literary mood was one of despair. Musset in looking back at that time in his *Confessions d'un enfant du siècle* said that poets were living in the gulf between the old civilization which had broken and the new which had not yet begun to shine above the horizon. A gulf of nothingness it was, where they wallowed in sensation, dreamed of glorious adulteries and moaned for vague infinities of ideal beauty that had no connection with the real. But as the thirties passed, these writers turned from self-consuming egotism to pity for all humanity, and a religion of human solidarity. Sand's *Lélia* as she appeared in the edition of 1833 died in despair; in the edition of 1836 she had found an outlet and growth in taking her part in the social movements of her time, guided by her friend Trenmor, a one time criminal purified through long suffering and the spokesman of the author on problems of social reform, of education, of curing the ills of materialism, of bringing justice to the poor and to criminals. Sand writing to the Comtesse d'Agoult in 1836 defined her ideal: "To rush into the bosom of Mother Nature; to regard her really as a *mother* and as a sister; stoically and religiously to eliminate from life all satisfied vanity; obstinately to resist the proud and the wicked; to be humble and meek with the unfortunate; to weep over the poor man's misery

and wish for no other consolation but the fall of the rich; to believe in no other God but him who preaches justice and equality to men; to venerate what is good; to judge with severity that which is but strong; to live on almost nothing, to give almost everything in order to set up again primitive equality and to revive divine institutions —such is the religion which I would proclaim in my humble retreat and which I aspire to preach to my twelve apostles under the lime-trees of my garden." Lamartine went through a similar development. The keynote of his volume of *Meditations* which swept France by storm in 1820 was, "moi, je meurs". By 1836 he published *Jocelyn,* the story of a simple village curé, and the embodiment of the poet's philosophy of love of humanity, the dignity of simple folk and simple toil. It is clear that he had gone far from his original position as Catholic and royalist and that he was on his way along the path which would bring him to join the republicans.

By 1840 most of the great spirits were turning toward democracy. They found in workers in their own group in society, in their struggles with wretched conditions and their efforts to assert themselves, the possibility that simple instinct, uncorrupted by a worn out civilization could save society. They became more and more influential in the revolt that was gathering.

An element of need for personal escape appears in this activity of the intellectuals in the struggle of the people. George Sand had gone to Paris suffering bitterly from her unhappy marriage, had then been plunged into a love affair ending tragically, and she was in desperate need of some larger philosophy to which she could hold. Lamartine was in despair over the death of Julia. A less fine spirit like Eugène Sue turned to extreme radicalism after he was refused a marriage in high social circles because of his lower birth.

But there was more to it than that. Giving their escape direction were the vast forces gathering toward the Revolution of 1848, the consciousness of misery and the new religion, especially as it expressed itself in Lamennais. The writers loved his religion of progress based on straight Christian principles, separated from the Church, and heralding the immediate approach of the Golden Age of liberty and justice. They were ready to welcome his ideal for the artist. The artist must keep before people the relation of their interest to the principle of brotherly conduct, Saint Simon had said.

"Poets must second the efforts of preachers." Poets, musicians, painters, architects should devote their energies to inspiring the people with love and hope—they must make the cult of the new religion. And Lamennais had written *De l'Art et du beau* to expound his theory which was based on these ideas of Saint Simon, an essay of magnificent artistic appreciation as beautiful in its expression as profound in its appeal.

Art is man's attempt to reproduce the beautiful, that is, truth which he has perceived through his senses. It must have some concrete form therefore. But form which is not the embodiment of a sublime and true idea is not art. "Art for art's sake is then an absurdity. To perfect the being of which it shows the progress is its aim." Real art must be penetrated by the ideas of the time, it must embody the truth as seen by a given epoch. It must therefore progress as humanity progresses. Artists must then not isolate themselves from men but "going deep down into the heart of society, gather into themselves the life that pulses there and express it in works which it will animate as the spirit of God animates and floods the universe. The old world is dissolving, old doctrines are being extinguished; but in the midst of confused toil and apparent disorder one sees new doctrines brooding, a new world being organized; the religion of the future is projecting its first rays on expectant humanity and on the destiny of the future: the artist must be the prophet of it."[1]

Many of the intellectuals found in him the spirit which transformed their despair into social activity. When Lamartine was mourning the death of Julia in 1818, it was Lamennais' essay on religion, and personal contact with him the year following, that brought him back to faith in God and devotion to all humanity. It was under his guidance that Lamartine's political ideas moved from belief in absolute monarchy controlling the people by force, to faith in a well of beauty hidden in the simple people, to a demand for the moral regeneration of society by a break with the past and a struggle for liberty. "Your social theory will be simple and infallible: taking God for your point of departure and for your end, the most general good of humanity for object, morality for torch, conscience for judge, liberty for route, you will run no risk of

[1] Lamennais, *De l'Art et du beau*, chap. V, p. 148.

losing your way" he wrote in *La Politique rationnelle*[1] of 1835. Lamartine was not an original political thinker—he knew that. But he was sensitive to the movements of his time and knew how to express them. In 1828 he wrote to Count de Virieu, "I have the instinct of the masses: that is my only political virtue. I feel what they feel and what they are going to do even when they are silent." With this instinct and with a guide like Lamennais, the poet was inevitably drawn to wrestle with the problem of misery. He was working on a committee in Paris for the relief of cholera in 1832. In 1835 he moved the Academy of Dijon to set as the subject for competition The Misery of the Working Classes. In the Chamber he made speeches on foundlings. His letters show that he was devoting energy and money to the relief of misery in his home town of Macon. He was drawn more and more into the growing revolutionary current. His theory of poetry changed. In 1836 in his preface to *Jocelyn* he expounded a theory of epic poetry exactly parallel to that of Lamennais in his *De l'Art et du beau.* The day of heroic epics is past, he urges. They were the poetical form suited to the childhood of peoples when there was need of the guardianship of great heroes and people attached their interest to powerful individualities who had freed them or cilivized them. But now the time has come for the epic to be no longer individual or even national. "Today individualities disappear or act with all their truth only in the dramas of history." Vision is larger today under the influence of a larger civilization and of institutions calling for more men engaged in the work of the social whole. Religion and philosophy teach that man is a small part of a great whole and that individual men are only a part of a great unity. Human interest therefore turns from individuals to human kind itself. The modern epic sings of all humanity. No one poet can hope to do more than sing one page. It is such a page that he tried to write in *Jocelyn,* a poem full of love for humble folk, of accurate characterization of them, and of pictures of their toil and faith, though centered around a romance of such outpourings of extravagances that it is difficult to read it through. No wonder that he was ready to encourage writers of the people when they began to appear—Perdiguier with his insistence on enlightenment and unity, Jasmin

[1] Lamartine, *La Politique rationnelle,* ¶5. See Marechal, *Lamennais and Lamartine,* pp. 231-33 for parallel with Lamennais.

with his poetical feeling for the folk and his spirit of charity so akin to Lamartine's own, Reboul with his insistence on justice and stern moral values. In letters of praise and sympathy, prefaces, efforts to find printers, Lamartine's warmth of feeling was expressed to these new writers.

Still, he drew nearer the people. In 1843 he began his *Histoire des Girondins*. Had the Great Revolution been only for the debased government which was disgracing France? The masses of the people must be taught to go back to their high tradition. "I wanted to make a code of action for the future republic," he wrote. "If a republic should soon receive from the nation and from French society the mandate of necessity, the duty of saving the land after the crumbling of the monarchy, I wished that the next republic should be Girondist rather than Jacobin . . . I wished that a conscientiously severe history of the first republic should warn the people against evil passions, illusions, fanaticisms, crimes and terrors which had ruined the reign of the people the first time."[1] So Lamartine, who had been brought up in his childhood with horror for the Revolution, was now seeing in it a glory which had made a great advance for the human spirit. Portraits of men, vivid and telling, long lyrical passages of the same appeal that is to be found in his oratory, volume after volume of the poetry of revolution—this was where the outcries of misery and the new religion had taken Lamartine.

His history brought forth banquets in his honor and mass tributes to him from the workers of the cities. Heine wrote, "How shall I picture the inspiration which took possession of me when Lamartine's *History of the Girondists appeared,* a work the popularity of which bordered on the fabulous; since Thiers' *History of the Revolution* and Eugène Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* no book here has raised such a stir." Presses were kept busy printing popular editions for the workers, who bought copies in large numbers. Lamartine was their hero. The days of February were not far distant when his same lyrical language and his sense of the feeling of the people would again and again control the mobs of Paris and when he should write and read the first fine decree of the new government abolishing the death penalty for political offenses.

George Sand was even more ready to welcome writers from the

[1] Lamartine, *Critique de l'Histoire des Girondins*, XLVIII and LI.

workers and the assertion of class which their appearance meant. On the whole she knew how to help them better than Lamartine. Though he had a feeling for what the masses were feeling, she knew them with deep intimacy, delighted in their friendship, understood where their weak points were and where their strength, and believed in them with a certainty quite beyond Lamartine's. This was partly due to the plebeian strain in her ancestry and her childhood out at Nohant where she played freely with the children of peasants and artisans. She is probably speaking truly enough when she writes in 1835, "the love of equality is the only thing that has not varied in me since I was born."[1] She was in Paris during the epidemic of cholera in 1832 and the riots of Saint Méry in 1834, stirred deeply by the misery of the people during both. The constant siege of beggars to which she was subjected made her question the whole problem of charity. "All happiness is like a theft in this badly ordered humanity where one cannot enjoy ease and liberty except to the detriment of his fellow, by the force of things, by the law of inequality; odious law, odious combinations, the thought of which poisons my sweetest joy in my family and sets me every moment in revolt against myself. I cannot console myself except in swearing to write as long as I have a breath of life, against this infamous maxim which governs the world: Everybody by himself, for himself. Since I know only how to speak and make this protest, I shall do it in every key."[2]

In an agony of search she questioned the existence of a God who could allow such evils. It was Lamennais who brought her a new faith. She had already been interested in the social problem by Michel de Bourges, one of the defenders of the insurrectionaries of Lyons. In 1835 she met Lamennais and became one of his most ardent followers in his fight against self interest and the exploitation of man by man. She wrote for his *Le Monde*. She adopted a natural religion freed from dogma and based on the Christian ideal. She finally broke away from him because she could not endure his attitude toward women. It had too much of Saint Paul in it for one of the most brilliant geniuses of her time. Like Lamennais she admired the Saint Simonians for their reach to the future. Like him she believed that the people must free themselves. "The ele-

[1] Sand, *Correspondance*, vol. I, 9 Novembre 1835.

[2] Sand, *Histoire de ma Vie*, vol. IX, p. 69.

ments of the future," she wrote in 1837, "ought to be a race of proletarians, wild, proud and ready to claim the rights of mankind by force." When their writings began to appear in 1839, then, her attention was already directed toward them and she was ready to throw her energies into their struggle.

But perhaps it was even more Lamennais' theory of the religion of art which affected her. She had been first introduced to him by Liszt at the time of the greatest intimacy between Lamennais and Liszt, whose discussions turned much on the place of art and the artist of life. Lamennais showed Liszt how to reconcile his art with his strong religious bent, set him off on his efforts to give musical instruction to the masses, to found choral societies for the people and to urge the necessity for popular concerts. Liszt himself gave the first of these in 1837 in Lyons for the benefit of workers suffering from starvation after a strike. Sand's work with Lamennais and her conversations with Liszt during the next year stirred her with theories of the social function of art, and of the priesthood of the artist. *Consuelo,* her novel of 1841, is the aesthetic expression of her faith. Consuelo, the great singer, by her art moves Count Albert out of his strange, unhealthy dissociation of personality. He recognizes her as a being apart, higher than other mortals. He can express to her his belief in his religion of music and his horror of an artistic interest that centers only in form. He looks back to the origins of religions when the theater and the temple were identical. He cries, "Music and poetry are the highest expressions of faith."

Sand's own writing became more and more an expression of a social faith. Her pen was constantly at the service of journals aiming to enlighten the people, and she had her share in founding several and in encouraging other people to do so. She helped Leroux and Viardot with *Le Revue Independante*—a journal in which Leroux could express his philosophy and in which she defended workers' poetry, discussed social affairs, and published novels beginning with *Horace,* all of them preaching her faith in the people and more and more presenting the theories of Leroux. For some years she worked closely with him and claimed that she was only "the popularizer with the elegant pen and impressionable heart who seeks to translate the philosophy of the master into novels." It was a philosophy of vague pantheism and belief in progress, a late variety of

Saint Simonism based not on charity, since this involves an invidious distinction between the benefitted and the benefactor, but on the principle of solidarity of society and of the equality of all mankind. It called for the reform of all institutions which produced a sense of division, of caste in society—the family, the nation, property. It asserted the sovereignty of the people and at the same time looked to the most intelligent to govern. After 1840 Sand's novels mostly preached some aspect of it. *Le Pêché de M. Antoine* most fully presents it in relation to the development of industry of the time and shows her grasp of the interplay of social forces.

It was to this religion of art that she turned the worker poets whom she knew. Study until you have a "firm and enlightened faith," she wrote Ponçy. "Thus you will evangelise your brothers the workers, and make new men of them. Aspire to that rôle which you have commenced by your intelligence, and that you will only complete by high virtue. No virtue without certitude; no certitude without examination and meditation. Keep your young blood cool, and without chilling your imagination, direct it towards heaven, its country! The wonders of the earth which excite your curiosity, the distant travels which tempt your inquietude will teach you nothing of that which will render you greater." It is the faith of Leroux which she advises him to study. "I have found in it calm, strength, faith, hope and the patient and persevering love of humanity; treasures of my childhood of which I had dreamed in Catholicism, but which had been destroyed by the examination of Catholicism, by the insufficiency of a worn-out creed, by the doubt and grief which in our time devour those whom egotism and affluence have not contaminated."[1]

Perdiguier's use of the song and his history of a movement of his fellow workers with its vision of unity made instant appeal to a writer on the full flood of this ideal of art, or Gilland's concept of what a journal for the people should be. Moreover, interest in writers from the people inevitably accompanied a religion of equality. This Sand and other intellectuals got from Rousseau and the feeling from 1793. "Why are you not a coarse and covetous landed proprietor, harsh to the poor, deaf to all ideas of progress, furious against the movement of equality?" she queries in a letter to Charles Duvernet in 1841 and proceeds to analyze how the revolutionary

[1] Sand, *Correspondance*, vol. I, 26 fevrier, 1843.

idea of '93 had filled them with horror when they were children and their first feelings of pity had been simply the Christian idea; how, when they later became insurgents, it was the revolutionary idea, aroused when people began to read again the philisophy of the eighteenth century.

From 1834 to 1838 Bouchez and Roux wrote their forty volumes of *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française* in which they asserted that in the great Revolution moral principles were more important than physical well-being. About the same time Cabet's *Histoire Populaire de la Révolution Française* appeared and reprints of Robespierre's work, of Saint Just's and Buonarroti's. This meant a growth of the idea of popular sovereignty and expectation of some great contribution from the masses. The most influential teacher of these principles was Michelet, whose courses at the Collège de France were crowded as he lectured on the history of France. The government was afraid of him, too, as of the rest of the forward looking men, and in January 1848 dismissed him. The mass protest of his students suggested the extent of his influence. Indeed he it was who made possible the union of students and workers in February, 1848. His *Histoire de France* was one of the first attempts of historians to show the part the people had played in history. "I have sketched the history of industry several times in my courses and in my books, especially in volume five of the *Histoire de France,*" he wrote in *Le Peuple*. "Nevertheless to understand it, one must mount higher and not envisage it as one does in the great and powerful corporations which even dominated cities. One should take first the toiler in his humble origin when . . . all united in scorning him."[1]

Michelet had himself as a child lived through freezing, poverty-stricken winters and agonizing misery; he had known the generosity and aspirations of the people. As he looked out on the changing society of his time with its hatred and servitude growing because of the instinct to gain and its mechanizing of man by the introduction of machinery, he came more and more to believe that it was the workers who would bring back the highest social life. In 1846 he wrote out his faith, in a little volume which is a prose poem of the people. "Look well at these people," he says of a worker's family, "and know well that to whatever height you climb you will

[1] Michelet, *Le Peuple*, p. 42, note.

find none who is morally superior. This woman is virtue with a particular charm of naïve reason and address to govern her energy unconsciously. This man is the strong, the patient, the courageous one who bears for society the heaviest burden of human life. True *compagnon du devoir* (beautiful title of *compagnonnage*) he holds himself there strong and firm like a soldier at his post. The more dangerous his trade, the more sure is his morality. A celebrated architect who comes from the people, said one day to one of my friends, 'The most honest men I have known are of this class. They know in going out in the morning that they may not come back at night and they are always ready to appear before the Lord.' "[1]

Their instinct, which acts directly, Michelet believed society needed as well as the analysis and reflection of other classes. The people on their side, he urged, should not try to rise out of their class and become bourgeois as they too often want to do, for that brings only mediocrity and uniformity. They should rise to a position of ease, for their large courage and fine instinct can be kept better when they are not broken with toil, but the great originality of the future is in strong men "who, born of the people, wish to remain of the people."[2]

The real revelation of the people Michelet looked for in the great genius whose simple heart enables him to understand the faint flickerings of instinct and gain new ideas from them; who feels the miseries of the whole world upon him, who leaves others to their emptiness, but who "remains tranquil at the steps of the throne of God" and who will bring others there through the love and sacrifice which alone can produce the great work of art. This genius will appear from the people. "The men brought up in our modern scholisticism will not renew the world. From the people will rise the historian of the people."[3]

When the writings of workers began to appear, many of the intellectuals, then, were ready to welcome them. They fought their battles in the press and helped to get their next volume published, aware that this literary expression was a part of the whole social revolution for which they hoped. Misery, contrasts between the rich and poor, these were to be faced and removed. The people—

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 113, p. 115.

that is, all human beings who worked—would bring human unity based on the full expression of human personality. It was this expression of personality which they were devoting themselves to making possible. It was faith in love, the deep generosity of the people and the gradual development of intelligence which inspired their activities. They were not blind to the difficulties. "You will see," George Sand writes to Charles Duvernet in 1841 about the people, "You will see them full of ardour and anxiety and mostly animated with those kind and grand sentiments without which neither Leroux nor yourself nor I should have them. But you will also notice enormous obstacles, culpable resistance, obstinate and selfish interests, and an inconceivable vagueness of thought and belief which in those masses dominates them all; dreadful uncertainty, a thousand whims, a thousand contrary dreams, the honest among them wishing for good, but scarcely three men in a million agreeing upon the same point, because as you truly remark the instinct of truth and justice is not to be met with anywhere, nowhere has that instinct reached the state of knowledge and certainty."[1] Nevertheless from them was to come the great revelation. "The people have not mind, in my opinion. They have better than that: poetic genius. With them form is nothing, they do not wear out their brains seeking it . . . But their thoughts are full of grandeur and power because they rest on a principle of eternal justice not known by society and preserved at the bottom of the people's heart. When this principle comes to light, whatever its expression, it strikes and flashes like the lightning of divine truth."[2]

The writings of the workers seemed the dawning of this light. The direct effect that these writers had on literature was comparatively slight during the forties. In Sand's *Horace*, Arsène the hero, is a picture of Gilland; her *Le Compagnon du Tour de France* is Agricol Perdiguier's *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* in novel form with Perdiguier himself the hero under the name of Pierre Huguenin. If one reads these without knowing the originals of the heroes, one inclines to scoff a little at the idealized picture. But Sand knew her men, and many of the fine traits which she shows, she drew straight from their lives. Arsène's artistic abilities, his amazing generosity and control in his relations with Marthe, who went off with

[1] Sand, *Correspondance*, vol. I, 27 septembre, 1841.

[2] Sand, *Horace*, ed. 1854, p. 121.

another man, his good thinking, his fine craftsmanship, his dependability, his earnestness to help other workmen, his high religious feeling are all based on the actual. Like Perdiguier, Pierre Huguenin hoped to conquer the rivalries between *devoirs* and establish unity among the workers. Sand has written scenes of real poignancy and considerable modernity in Pierre's sorrow over the enmities between societies, his attempts to get his society to refrain from competing with its rival, the passion with which the group voted him down, the brutal struggle which followed not through the fault of his society, his facing out the problem of the rightness of principles even if they seem impractical in fact for the moment. Though expressed with a lyricism which is George Sand's rather than a workman's, even a Perdiguier's, the matter of them is realistic enough. Here too was belief in the worker as artist—Pierre at once recognizes the finest engravings; he builds a beautiful staircase with the devotion and vision of a great architect; his friend Amarny, another simple carpenter, suddenly carves out of wood a head which the connoisseur of the chateau pronounces a real work of art with the naiveté and truth of the fifteenth century. Sand exaggerated the spontaneity perhaps—Perdiguier spent night after night studying design, and his great pride was the skill which he had developed through years.

It was rather owing to the fact that they were actual embodiments of much of the ideal of the people and helped the people to become increasingly self-assertive that these men influenced the intellectuals and gave them more and more faith in the masses. A whole crop of novels and plays began to appear glorifying the workers. Eugène Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* which was published in serial form, brought thousands of subscribers to the *Constitutionnel* which printed it, and was then bought by countless workmen—a melodramatic novel of the world of criminals where souls among them were moved by sympathy to a different ideal and purified by being given a chance for a normal, reasonably assured life; of honest workmen failing to keep their families from starvation and cold and sickness however hard they worked, yet heroically showing the highest honesty and family loyalty. Felix Pyat's *Les deux Serruriers*[1] and later his *Le Chiffonier de Paris*[2] scored great suc-

[1] *The Two Locksmiths.*

[2] *The Ragpicker of Paris.*

cess at the Boulevard theatres. The ragpicker came to be a favorite type—a dry philosopher, canny about smelling out the wicked intents of high nobles, loyally devoting himself to saving a fine young working-girl heroine, droll about his sufferings, rising at times to magnificent anger.

The whole movement of the time with its contrasts and the obviously increasing awareness of them on the part of the workmen found its most characteristic expression in *Les Misérables*. It has in it a little of Sue, a little of Sand, a little even of Charles Ponçy's tales of the *Le Galèrien*. Though it was not published until 1860, it altogether belongs to that time just before the Revolution. Hugo was no more a political thinker than Lamartine, and he never did come to have the belief in the masses that Lamartine had. But under the new religious influences and the inevitable awareness of misery he had turned more and more from his early exotic poetry to solemn warnings to governments to hear the cries of wrongs, and he had written picture after picture of misery. A note in *Choses vues* dated 1846 gives the origin of *Les Miséables*. "Yesterday, I was going to the Chamber of Peers. It was fine and very cold, in spite of the sun and its being noon. I saw coming along Rue de Tournon, a man whom two soldiers were conducting. This man was blonde, pale, thin, haggard; about thirty years old, with trousers of coarse cloth, feet bare and skinned, in *sabots,* with bloody cloths wound around his ankles to take the place of socks; a short blouse, mud-stained on the back which indicated that he habitually slept in the street; head bare and bristling. He had a loaf of bread under his arm. The people around him said that he had stolen this bread and that it was because of this that they were taking him off . . ." A carriage drove up with a ducal crown on it. Inside, a woman was playing with a baby and oblivious of the man. But he stared fixedly at it. Hugo goes on, "This man was no longer a man for me, he was the spectre of misery; it was the brusque, deformed, lugubrious apparition in broad daylight of a revolution still hidden deep in the darkness, but which is coming. Formerly the poor man elbowed the rich, this spectre encountered this glory; but they did not look at each other. They passed. That could go on for a long time. From the moment when this man perceives that this woman exists, while this woman does not perceive that this man is there, catastrophe is inevitable."

This was the realization won by society generally in France and England during the period. But the radical thinkers of France with their belief in the masses of the people went farther. It was their faith which at once helped the writers of the people to consciousness of new capacities within themselves and gave them formulae for a new religion which they took over as their own. Because this influence was essentially religious, it tended especially to emphasize their literature of propaganda. It had the danger of turning the workers from their own expression to imitation. Often their songs and stories were merely skeleton forms carrying the generalities of this religion. Happily some of them were strong enough in their consciousness of the worker and of the place of industry to begin to find artistic expression of their own. The intellectuals for their part did their best to encourage them in this and the whole cry of their criticism comes to: Stick to your own people. Write their lives. That is what society needs.

The worker struggling to speak in England met no such sympathetic and general religion of the people, no such challenge to them to free themselves. The thunderings of Carlyle woke England to realization of the misery of her people, and the challenge was popularized by the novels of Dickens with their infinite comprehension of the poor and their gospel of charity, of Disraeli with their terrible pictures of brutalized operatives and mob violence, of Mrs. Gaskell with her exact knowledge of trade unions and the sufferings of factory hands. It was the spectacle of the brutalized operative that they dwelt on too often. No great novel, no prophetic gospel called the workers to rise and free themselves.

But England was touched by this need of a new religion, or at least the need of doing something about the misery. Carlyle's *Signs of the Times* in 1829 demanded that statistics of national wealth include the condition of the people and lamented that social life was being dried up by the decrease of interest in moral science and the absorption with material philosophy. Published in the French *Le Revue Brittanique,* this article attracted the Saint Simonians who sent him at once copies of *Le Nouveau Christianisme* and of the recent exposition of their doctrine. Their search for a new spiritual principle was sympathetic to Carlyle, their confidence that the poorest classes were soon to reap the harvest of their toil, and their principle that the wealth of the world should be organized and man

joined with man for the exploitation of nature. Carlyle wrote to D'Eichtal that he believed a new organization of society must come which should be based on the religion of the "profound mystic incommensurable sympathy of man for man."

Sartor Resartus, begun in 1830, and *Past and Present,* published in 1843, are founded on the principles of Saint Simonism. Both volumes are strikingly parallel in many ways to Lamennais and Michelet. One is curiously impressed with the unity of thought in the two countries however different the details. Here is the same moral challenge, "Thou shalt descend into thy inner man and see if there be any traces of a *soul* there; till then there can be nothing done! O brother, we must if possible resuscitate some soul and conscience in us, exchange our dilettantism for sincerities, our dead hearts of stone for living hearts of flesh."[1] And to find the soul? Work.

"'Know thyself': long enough has the poor 'self' of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to 'know' it I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual; know what thou canst work at; and work at it like a Hercules."[2] What triumphs work has brought! What vast controls over nature the new inventions! But men are not alive because they desecrate work in serving only Mammon. "Ye shall know that Mammon in never such gigs and flunky 'respesctabilities' is not the alone God; that of hismelf he is but a Devil and even a Brute God." Rise oh ye workers and live, he cries, "not as a bewildered bewildering mob; but as a firm, regimented mass, with real captains over (you). All human interests . . . have at a certain stage of their development required organizing: and work the grandest of human interests does now require it."

He took the phrase "organization of labor" straight from France. But he held with the original Saint Simonians that it should not be brought about by the whole people. He tags trade unions as "desperate"; they and Chartism are classed with "anarchic mutiny", the symbols of all violence. With the Messianic faith of the Continent, he looks for a genius to arise to save the people. This genius is to be a man simple of heart and of great depth of vision; he may come from the people—Abbot Samson did. The point is that by intuition

[1] Carlyle, *Past and Present,* Book I, chap. III.

[2] *Ibid.,* Book III, chap. XI.

he shall be in harmony with the Great Soul of the world and since this is just, he will be infallibly just. The man most open to this revelation is the literary artist. He will therefore become the priest to lead society into the ways of justice and wisdom. The many will find freedom under this despotism, for liberty is doing what is wise, and therefore in obedience to a wise leader or even an able executive. Carlyle was in a hurry for immediate improvement, and the only quick way was through a czar or an aristocracy of talent. He differed from the Saint Simonians in looking back to the past for models of social organization—the Middle Ages, when men had vitality to perceive their leader and to choose him, and when society was organic, man related to man by something more fundamental than the "cash nexus" of the wage system.

Writers from among the workingmen would not find here the great hope of the French in the "Would ye be free? Free yourselves!" of Lamennais. Even Mill, who by 1843 was more and more moving toward collectivism and universal suffrage, had no belief in the immediacy of the people's ability to govern—it might take several ages for them to become sufficiently educated. He was afraid of the tyrannical majority of democracy. Both he and Carlyle were looking for remedial measures. The novelists were following them. Even Mrs. Gaskell looked with some horror on the trade unions as violent, terrible organizations, and expected enlightened industrials like Thornton at the end of *North and South* to remove miseries by working in cooperation with their men. She knew industry far more directly that George Sand, for she lived among the operatives of Manchester. She was a realist dreaming not of the glorious, heroic proletarian but knowing tragic, misery-worn workmen of great goodness of heart, of inevitable bitterness, often driven into fearful violence. There was no cult of the Revolution to give the English expectation of immediately setting up the new organization, and they looked with scepticism on their French neighbors who talked revolution more and more openly and seemed ready to put general principles into effect without due scrutiny of their practicability.

For Carlyle sitting in his study, even though he in a measure understood the misery of his time, it was easy enough to preach the gospel of work. It was sound too; it was exactly what the French working men were writing and singing. It could scarcely touch the

miseries of the masses of England whose only method of claiming their manhood lay precisely in the organization which Carlyle damned. It is true that his gospel made possible in his review of Ebenezer Elliott's *Corn Law Rhymes* in 1831, his fine recognition of genuineness, his tribute to the epic of industry and his call for more such poetry. It brought worker poets the encouragement of his "One such that has found a voice: who knows how many mute but not inactive brethren he may have, in his own and in all other ranks? Seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal! There are the men wheresoever found who are to stand forth in England's evil day, on whom the hope of England rests." It is true too that Carlyle appreciated Thomas Cooper and encouraged him to write the prose that would bring order into this present world of chaos. Indeed even the conservative journals, though silent for the most part, were not wholly condemnatory.[1] There was praise for real poetical ability or high narrative skill. But always there was counsel to patience, to gentleness, to some different political philosophy, counsel which implied lack of faith and some feeling against the worker's organizations. Though the intellectual movement of the workers and that of the main stream did come together in a way, there was no such interplay of faith as in France. The Chartists always remained voices in the main unrecognized outside their own group. It was only in 1849 that Kingsley made a hero of Cooper in his *Alton Locke* when Cooper, disgusted with the tactics of Chartism, was at a stage ready for Kingsley's Christianity. It was George Eliot in the next literary generation who really took up Sand's faith and wrote of the Chartist poet, Gerald Massey, in *Felix Holt,* and the deep moral values of workmen in *Adam Bede.*

France was for the moment at a singularly happy stage of conceiving of richness of personality in the worker and therefore for society through a synthesis of work and organization. The failure of the Revolution dashed this hope. But it still persisted in some of the worker poets who continued to write in the fifties and whose popularity stirred up a controversy this time purely literary.

In 1850 on the occasion of the publication of Pierre Dupont's *Muse populaire* an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* on *La*

[1] In the *Quarterly Review* from 1835-1851, there are only two reviews of workmen's or Chartist's literature, one on *Ernest, or Political Regeneration* in 1839, vol. 65; the other on Samuel Bamford's *Passages from the Life of a Radical* in 1843, vol. 74.

Poésie et les poètes populaires by Émile Montégut took up the cudgels against the group of the thirties and forties as a "flock of socialist poets, none really of the people in the true sense." He showed no sign of understanding the people in any such complete fashion as George Sand did, for he tried to limit the concept to the peasantry. "Real poetry of the people, that which is composed not by a lettered poet or by a man of the upper classes is imprinted with a singular calm, a tenderness, naïve grace and infinite sweetness. Gaiety and good humor shine throughout it but are manifested rarely as brilliant flashes of passing happiness or as the result of the pleasures and diversions of an instant: one would say that they are rather a permanent state of the soul." He considered Burns and Hebel the only real poets of the people. "Never have I felt more than on reading Burns' verse the eternity of the people, its imperishable immortality. While monarchies crumble, and aristocracies and all the governing classes of the world fall and disappear, the people never die, and always at work, they bubble like the springs of life, giving back to the world when it has lost its hope, fresher feeling and younger thoughts." It is not surprising then that the critic found only Pierre Dupont's rustic songs of the least importance. Even these he attacked on the ground that the poet was too much educated to have the naiveté of the people and not educated enough to have the necessary technique.

At the same time Sainte Beuve with more comprehension urged that Dupont in his poems of work struck the note of the true poet of the people, but even Sainte Beuve's comments on style showed some lack of realization that the revolution which was going on in society might demand new style, for he warned the singer to avoid new technical and industrial terms.

It was not the socialist group who took up the defence of Dupont; in those days of political reaction the emphasis had shifted to literary issues. Champfleury, the protagonist of the new school of realism, wrote two articles on *Chansons populaires d'aujourd'hui* in the *Messager de l'Assemblèe* in which he praised Dupont for "avoiding the sentimentality of romance and idealization of nature and for contenting himself with noting the aspects of the people's intimate life, their language and even their music." Balzac had turned Champfleury to close scrutiny of the people of his time; but it was Dupont who made him see workers of town and village with

more sympathy. In his *Les Oies de Noël* which he wrote in 1850 for Proudhon's journal, he chose characters like coopers and farmers, the favorites of Dupont, and showed the lower classes sympathetically as struggling loyally and disinterestedly against greed and jealousy; and there are pictures of their work, their houses, and their fêtes.[1]

From 1853 to 1857 Champfleury was elaborating his theory of the new literature. "People who live in a century of railroads and steamboats have other ideas, other tastes and other needs than the good people of wigs of the great century. To interest them it is necessary to present them with works which move in the direction of their preoccupations." The novel in prose, he thought, would be the new form most suited to the variety of tastes of a modern audience. It must present whole classes of people and must therefore be impersonal in observation; it would prefer the lower classes as subject matter, for they have a larger place than the *élite* and in them one comes nearer understanding the living forces that move the mechanism of society. Pierre Dupont, who belonged in the little group gathered around Champfleury and the painter, Courbet, believed in faithfulness to detail and in the necessity for writing of the people, but he challenged the doctrine of impersonality because he thought it led to mere photography. In conservative literary circles the group was scored as seeing only ugly, low down subjects, for lacking an ideal and imagination, and for lack of art. A battle royal raged in the press. It probably helped to sell the novels of the group and these had no small part in preparing an audience for *Madame Bovary* in 1857.[2]

On Flaubert himself and the Goncourts, the main novelists of the fifties and sixties, the realists had little influence. It was the later Zola who appreciated their work and who was much influenced by them. Flaubert had their notion of objectivity in analyzing society, and documented himself with the thoroughness of the most exacting scholar, but it was the scientific movement and that of "art for art's sike," rather than the democratic or the realistic which motivated him. *L'Education sentimentale,* begun in 1863, is the great

[1] Champfleury did not believe that poets could ever come from the factory, however.

[2] Bouvier, Émile, *La Battaille Réaliste,* 1844-57, Paris, 1913, a careful doctor's thesis going into this whole movement of realism with such thoroughness that it needs only the briefest allusions here.

objective picture of the Revolution of 1848. The good hearted Dussardier represents the best of the workmen, and Senecal the socialists, with the insincerities and cruelties of which Reboul had given warning. Powerful mob scenes accumulate, exact pictures of the processes and working conditions in a fayence factory, suggestions of conditions in the silk industry at Lyons and of large enterprises of railroads and coal mining, the power of great bankers, the hectic speculations on the exchange. Yet Flaubert hated modern industry and entirely failed to understand the connections between it and the Revolution. Nor did he have any sympathy with the masses of the people or hope that their emancipation might bring a new and valuable element to society. They could never have mind enough to understand the most important factor in civilization. In unqualified disapproval of the crop of novels about workers, he wrote to one of the authors of such a novel that this class is no more interesting as expression of human passion than anybody else, and all prejulice in favor of any given class of humanity is unsound and unproductive of real art. Whether this is ultimately true or not, it is clear that Flaubert did not grasp the real shift in art at the time, whatever extremists might claim: the discovery that the workman is *as* interesting as anybody else.

This conception the Goncourts seem more nearly to have approached. Their *Germinie Lacerteux,* published in 1864, Zola claimed to be the first real appearance of the worker in French literture. Certainly its realistic details, its combination of the ugly with the aspiring in Germinie, and the details of her background are new in tone. The writers' preface seems to show them a part of the movement of their time, for they say that "in the nineteenth century in the time of universal suffrage, democracy and liberalism, the lower classes have a right to appear in the novel" and they emphasize their desire to write the tragedy of the poor workers in the name of humanity. But this has to be taken with some reservations for their journal shows that the story was the life of their own servant and that they had worked themselves up into frenzied emotions over it. They took after all a purely aesthetic pleasure in the raw physical details which this subject permitted them. It is possible, however, that the writers of *The Mistresses of Louis XV* would not have used the story of Germinie at all if they had not lived in the age of interest in working people.

But it was really Zola who understood the implications of industry and the appearance of a new class. The *Rougon Macquart* series is a painting of society very much after the formula of Champfleury, but with a new slant toward a thesis. The material was no longer the "people" in the general idealising sense of many of the earlier writers, but quite definitely the industrial workers of the cities, too often with emphasis on the elements of physical debasement. *L'Assommoir* in 1877 marks a date, and *Germinal,* (1885) Zola's greatest workman's story, is still the classic novel on coal.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORKERS' LITERATURE OF CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS

The literary expression of the workers of 1830-1848 is first of all propaganda, part of the first stage in the development of modern class-consciousness among the workers. At first formless, a wail over miseries, insistence on contrasts between the rich and the poor, sometimes hopeless plaints, sometimes plaints ending in a call to God or to the rich to help the poor, it more and more tended to become the expression of the need of organized mass movement directed and controlled by themselves. This was at first hopeful of love and unity, or of gradual enlightenment, and carried with it a new religion of Utopias and new theories of education. But eventually it crystallized into class-consciousness rooted in the belief that only force could win the right to life, and then to sheer lust for power, often pouring out invective scorching in its hatred. There were always voices of workers raised against this. It would be entirely unsound to try to talk of the workers in the mass.

Even in England where the development of the proletariat was far advanced, the older writers who had seen the violences against machinery and who had been trained in the Corn Law agitation, were throwing their influence against destruction by 1838 and 1839 when the Chartists were preaching it. They were insistent on the need of enlightenment. Samuel Bamford, a Lancashire hand-loom weaver and poet, was typical. Then Thomas Cooper published his stories of the Leicester stockingers with their ironies of starvation and their bitterness, always very moral tales meant as often for the upper classes as for the workers, for he was trying to bridge the gulf of ignorance separating the two groups, especially by showing that workers were thinking. But poets like Gerald Massey asserted more and more the contrast between the possible beauty of "toil ennobled lands" if there could be love between men, and the slavery of present machine industry with its child labor and poor-houses, and they chanted swords and blood. They had learned the trick of fierce invective from Ebenezer Elliott's *Corn Law Rhymes*. This

strange cotton manufacturer who wrote most conventional poetry on every other subject, in the heat of agitation for the repeal of the grain laws sang the miseries of starvation and the hatreds of the underdog in a new kind of verse. "Poetry is impassioned truth" he urged, "and why should we not utter it in the shape that touches our condition the most closely—the political?" and so all over England workers who were ready to condemn him because he was not a Chartist, sang his songs like *Rats, How Long Oh Lord?, The Black Hole of Calcutta*:

> Bread-tax-eating absentee
> What hath bread-tax done for thee?
> Cramm'd thee, from our children's plates,
> Made thee all that nature hates,
> Fill'd thy skin with untax'd wine,
> Fill'd thy purse with cash of mine,
> Fill'd thy breast with hellish schemes,
> Fill'd thy head with fatal dreams—
> Of potatoes basely sold
> At the price of wheat in gold,
> And of Britons sty'd to eat
> Wheat-pric'd roots, instead of wheat.

France gave even more varied expression to these currents of feeling among the workers and in general of higher literary merit. Moreau, Lapointe, Jasmin and an occasional Saint Simonian were plaintive over sorrows; Lachambeaudie told biting fables of contrasts; Dupont sang the people's hunger and the danger to society if their need was not recognized. Usually these outcries were accompanied with a note of hope. Most of all the French sang of the dignity of the men as workers and when they came to answer what should be done about the poverty which was the chief problem they saw, they dreamed of a new world, warned against violence and the people's own moral failings, and called them to education and association. The main French cry was never "Down with the tyrants", but "Organize a world of brothers". The best literary expression of their own religion was written in German by William Weitling who was much influenced both by French industrial conditions and by French thought, and who wrote *Humanity as It is and as It Ought to Be* (1838); *Confessions of a Poor Sinner* (1843); *Guaranties of Social Harmony* (1842); and *Prison Poems* (1843).

But however the form of expression might differ in the three peoples, whether it was the generally more fierce invective of the English or the concrete pictures of the French and their great hope in moral control, or the more metaphysical analyses of the Germans and their final materialism, the heart of the challenge of literature to industry and the actual distribution of wealth was always the right to life as over against the right to property. The people's voices were raised in the industrial countries to chant this until the early fifties when reaction swept them into a temporary silence.

* * *

The black cold of November has descended upon the city. A poet who has lain wretchedly ill in the hospital of St. Martin is thinking of a poor old woman gathering some dead, fallen branch for her fire, to nourish her child for a few days yet and then to die. Alas! the poor man dies in his prison of ice, dies while the nonchalant rich man leaves his summer chateau and travels to Paris, where he will live gaily, for "with money one can make beautiful days"; his every caprice can be satisfied, he can buy the sweat of the poor, the fruits of all the arts and all climates, nights of love, wild orgies of pleasure. Bitterness settles over the spirit of Moreau, for it is he there sad with the miseries of all the poor of the great city. He turns on these rich and warns them:

> Mais pour bien savourer ce bonheur solitaire
> Ne regardez jamais autour de vous, Passez
> De vos larges manteaux masqués et cuirassés:
> Car si vos yeux tombaient sur les douleurs sans nombre
> Qui rampent à vos pieds et frissonnent dans l'ombre,
> Comme un frisson de fièvre, à la porte d'un bal,
> Le pitié vous prendrait, et la pitié fait mal.[1]

Bitterly he imagines the dazzling gilt chariot thundering over a bridge of the Seine, warns it to pass quickly lest it hear the coroner dragging the river for dead bodies of wretched men, and with a swift touch he suggests ominous results:

> Il est vrai: quelque fois une plainte legère
> Blesse la majesté du riche qui digère;

[1] "But to relish this lonely happiness fully, never look about you. Pass by, masked and shielded in your ample cloaks: For if your eyes fell on the countless woes which creep at your feet and, like the shaking of fever, shudder in the dark at the door of a ball, pity would seize you, and pity gives pain."

Des hommes, que la faim moissonne par millions,
En se comptant des yeux disent: Si nous voulions![1]

But he sinks back hopelessly: change cannot come, the world is too old. Yet, yet the oppressed people will rise. Fiercely his anger burns, higher and higher as he thinks of them. Saturnalia of revolution will follow; the people will demand everything; there will be horrors of devastation. Paris will be a new Sodom. The thunder will strike it! Barbarians will come to ask where the city was. "And I", he cries wildly, "I shall applaud! My youth will come back!" Suddenly his whole mood changes. A touch of radiance comes over him. A little happiness has turned his hatred into hope, and he thinks of those not so fortunate with less bitterness but with sadness and longing:

Dieu ménagea le vent à ma pauvreté nue;
Mais le siècle d'airain pour d'autres continue,
Pour des maux fraternels mon coeur est en émoi
Dieu, révèle-toi bon pour tous comme pour moi.[2]

Moreau here parallels in mood the English Samuel Bamford whose *God Help the Poor* pictures another poor woman huddled freezing in a corner, trying to keep her children warm, and the weariness of lives of toil rewarded at best with only a taste of food. Snow drifts in; they have no fire. "God help the poor". The Englishman ends as Moreau does on a note of hope:

The night-storm howls a dirge across the moor—
And shall they perish thus, oppressed and lorn?
Shall toil and famine hopeless, still be borne?
No! God will yet arise and help the poor.

Bamford was one of the older worker poets. The later ones in England when they faced the contrasts between the rich and the poor, more often took on the tone of Elliott's invective.

Only occasionally is this true in France. The poet Auguste Barbier taught France what English industry did to her workers and warned the south not to be dragged into that hell. He visited Lon-

[1] "It is true: sometimes a light plaint wounds the majesty of the rich man who is digesting; men whom hunger mows down by millions, count themselves over and say: If we wanted to!"

[2] "God spared my naked poverty from the wind; but the century of iron continues for others. My heart is torn for the woes of my brothers. Oh God, be good to them as to me."

don and the spinning mills of Manchester and came back horror-struck to write of England in *Lazare* (1837) as a great boat floated on the ocean only by virtue of pain and misery. He describes the machines:

> Là, tous les instruments qui vibrent à l'oreille
> Sont enfants vigoureux du cuivre ou de l'airain;
> Ce sont de durs ressorts dont la force est pareille
> A cent chevaux frappés d'un aiguillon soudain;
> Ici comme un taureau, la vapeur prisonnière
> Hurle, mugit au fond d'une vaste chaudière,
> Et, poussant au dehors deux énormes pistons,
> Fait crier cent rouets, à chacun de leurs bonds.
> Plus loin, à travers l'air des milliers de bobines
> Tournant avec vitesse et sans qu'on puisse voir,
> Comme mille serpents aux langues assassinés
> Dardent leurs sifflements du matin jusqu'au soir.
> C'est un choc éternel d'étages en étages,
> Un concert infernal qui va toujours grondant,
> De chaines, de crampons se croisant, se heurtant,
> Un concert infernal qui va toujours grondant,
> Et dans le sein duquel un peuple aux noirs visages
> Un peuple de vivants rabougris et chêtifs
> Jette comme chanteur des cris sourds et plaintifs.[1]

Then follows the cry of the worker over his vast toil, his need of food and clothing, his will to work if he can have these for reward, but he is destroyed by consumption and fever; his children wail that they cannot breath in the air of the shops and cry out for the freshness of the country; the wife and mother is driven by the machines until the moment of her giving birth to her child. And the master answers:

> Woe to the bad workman
> Who weeps instead of toiling.

[1] "There, all the instruments which vibrate against the ear are vigorous children of brass or iron; they are the hard powers whose strength is equal to a hundred horses prodded with sudden spur. Here, like a bull, imprisoned steam roars and bellows at the bottom of a vast boiler, and pushing out enormous pistons, makes a hundred spindles whir at each rebound. Farther along, thousands of bobbins turning in the air so fast one cannot see, like a thousand snakes darting poisonous tongues, hiss from morning to night. There is a continual shock from floor to floor, a confusion of levers, wheels, chains, cramp-irons crossing each other, clashing; an infernal concert which is forever roaring and in the bosom of which a people with black faces, a people of stunted and mean beings, raises cries like a singer, cries confused and plaintive."

and the noise of the machines recommences—frightful with its dull fracas, its sharp cries, its terrible clatter, and the human sounds are lost in the chaos.

Ah, le hurlement sourd des vagues sur la grève
Le cri des dogues de Fingal,
Le sifflement des pins que l'ouragan soulève
Et bat de son souffle infernal,
Le plainte des soldats déchirés par le glaive,
Frappés par le boulet fatal,
Tous les bruits effrayants que l'homme entend ou rève
A ce concert n'ont rien d'égal;
Car cette noire symphonie
Aux instruments d'airain, à l'archet déstructeur,
Ce sombre oratoire qui fait saigner le coeur,
Sont bien souvent joués et chantés en partie
Par l'avarice et la douleur.[1]

These are the accents of a man horror-struck and thoughtful rather than those of bitter rage. His *Les Mineurs de Newcastle* supplements the picture and his *Bedlam* is the pity of brutalized populations reduced to the madness of gin. Do not try to follow this, he cries. Keep your easy going life of the south. Machines can only prove desolating.

The workers themselves rarely talked like this. Flashes of anger and exultation over possible revolution sound warnings to a generally indifferent public. But the French draw no pictures of child labor like Massey's in *Laura* nor of the poor-house. Theodore Lebreton, who knew the wretchedness of Rouen tells of the usual workman's death in a poor-hospital. Savinien Lapointe is fierce in his story of how a poor worker murdered his rich neighbor, driven wild by his luxurious revelling in the face of his own

[1] "Ah, the heavy roar of the waves on sandy shore,
The cry of the dogs of Fingal,
The whistling of pine trees whipped by hurricanes
And beaten by their hellish blast,
The cries of soldiers torn by swords
Or struck by fatal bullets.
All these most frightful sounds that man has heard or dreamed
Are nothing to this concert—
For this black symphony
With instruments of brass and a destroying fiddle-bow
This sombre oratory which makes the heart bleed,
Oh, they are often played and sung in chorus
By avarice and woe."

starvation; and in telling the story of an infanticide, lashes society for letting a rich man bring a poor girl to this tragedy, punishing her and letting him go scot free. The writer's invective swells with hatred and even becomes so hysterical with the wrongs of the poor that it outreaches the limits of art altogether. It is in tone more like the violent verse of some of the English Chartists, like Massey's *Red Republican.*

Ay, tyrants, build your bulwarks! forge your fetters! link your chains!
As brims your guilt-cup fuller, ours of grief runs to the drains:
Still as on Christ's brow, crowns of thorn for Freedom's martyr's twine—
Still batten on live hearts, and madden o'er the hot blood wine!
Murder men sleeping; or awake—torture them dumb with pain,
And tear with hands all bloody-red, mind's jewels from the brain!
Your feet are on us, tyrants: strike, and hush Earth's wail of sorrow!
Your sword of power, so red to-day, shall kiss the dust tomorrow!

This repeated use of the image of blood and the identification of modern masses with the martyrdom of Christ recur in English workers' verse. They call their fellows, "branded slaves", "yokefellows"; they hear "the fetters clank"; "hearts have rotted" along the way of life which is a "byeway of blood"; "scourges of slavery rend hearts". The voice of the Past, wailing,

Like a sound from the Dead Sea shrouded in gloom.
Wearily,
. . . . . comes up a desolate road,

They call up the most hideous images they can think of and pile them on, line after line. It is true that the life which they knew merited horrible expression; but one gets lost in imagery often inexact enough, and the whole picture of the workers' lives becomes generalized and fails to carry.

Of the French, Jasmin with no underlining of the moral writes the story of *Le Semaine d'un Fils* with its background of long hours of work, ending only "when the stars shone". His kindly, reverent, self-respecting human beings lived always within the sight of want so that a time of sickness of the father brought suffering of cold and hunger to the whole family, and sometimes the loss of the job on which they all depended. Their loneliness could scarcely believe in such a possibility as a friend, and yet how desperately they

longed for one. Or he tells us the story of poverty in his own family, their one wretched room, the bitterness when their grandfather died in the poor-house, the mother's struggles. It is all pointed less to lashing people into activity of hatred than simply expressing their lives or moving them to charity. Cooper's *Wise Saws,* tales of the stockingers, aimed similarly in England to reveal the pathos and self-respect of the men, but though their conversations were real, the tales oozed a too obvious moral intent as Jasmin's did not, and their plots are not nearly so well developed.

But in all these verses and tales, the workers' own consciousness of the implications of misery is a new note. As long as the worker dragged out an existence naively and dumbly accepting his lot, there could be little change. But the moment he became enough aware to express it, the first step toward his modern position was taken.

Pierre Dupont of all the writers went to the heart of the tragedy. In 1846 when France was suffering from famine, the wide-spread misery and the constant deaths from starvation, stirred him to the poem of the deepest cry of the people, that for bread. Where famine stalks a city like a wolf, or like a bird flies over the walls, an intangible figure not to be stopped, violence follows, grim irony of farm tools turned to weapons and then state executions. How unfair they are, for the people must have bread! How dangerous, for then the people cry for blood! The earth could provide for all if it were worked. The poet sees the vast futility of the bickerings of European diplomats in the game known as "great politics". Let us plough the earth, he says, and the people will have food. What a picture of vast, yellowing grain fields and of happy people armed for the struggle with nature not with each other. Ever at the pause of each thought, a deep refrain from the very heart of nature recurs insistently like the undertone of wind on a distant forested mountain:

> One does not stop the murmur
> Of the people when they say, I starve,
> For it is the cry of nature,
> One must have bread.[1]

Sung by the people this song had possibilities of becoming sinister and dangerous. In 1848 it won an almost unbelievable popularity

[1] For the whole *Chant du Pain,* see Appendix.

On one occasion at the Théâtre Porte Saint Martin where they were playing *Misère,* a drama picturing the wretched conditions of the proletariat and ending with most of the characters dead from hunger, the audience began to sing Dupont's song as the curtain went down. Steadily the swell of it rose. The police tried to stop it, but they were entirely powerless. The refrain became a terrible rhythm beating through the house. It was the rising of the flood-tide that the poet himself sang in the last stanza.

But even when there is production which might be expected to provide for all, the lot of the people is not happier, cry the poets. Again and again the image of the bees and their honey recurs in both English and French verse:

> As soon as they have made the honey,
> The masters chase away the bees.

The people do not wear the garment made from their flax, sings Vinçard, nor drink the wine from their vines; in the cities, clothed in rags, they make palaces and temples, but their reward for such glory is the poor-house. Ponçy's painter signs a lilting verse and thinks of gay fêtes on Sundays, but the result of this work is lungs ruined by his work. The shoemaker cobbles until midnight but even so cannot avoid hunger. The ship-unloader must beg in his old age, for in spite of his years of toil, he has been unable to save anything. Of all the verse of lament, *Une Plainte* of Savinien Lapointe is perhaps the most appealing and the most felicitous in phrase:

> Tout nous échappe, hélas! pain, fruits; à notre table,
> Le vin ne vient jamais comme un convive aimable,
> Y semer la gaité; nous grelottons: le froid
> Aux trous de nos haillons s'engouffre, et point de toit
> Où l'on puisse un moment se' débleuir la face,
> Réchauffer ses pieds nus engourdis dans la glace;
> Il fait pourtant bien froid, et rien pour nous couvrir;
> Et nous sommes à jeun; que le faim fait souffrir!
> Ah! sur ce globe étroit la mulitude abonde;
> Oui, le pauvre est de trop!—pourtant la sève inonde
> Blés, ceps, bois, fruits et fleurs, chanvre et lin. Il nous faut
> Subir la faim, la soif, et le froid, et le chaud!
> Qui donc a fait les lots, désigné le partage?

Quel ogre a dévoré le commun héritage?
Tel est le cri du Peuple; il s'élève, il se perd,
Emporté par le vent comme un bruit au désert.[1]

Lachambeaudie, often exaggerated and sentimental in his parallels from nature, often sharp and biting in his contrasts, has one line to watch this spirit of Lapointe's. In it is the whole tragedy of the poor: "Mais moi, j'ai tant souffert que je ne pleure plus!"[2]

The poets mark the bitter contrasts with the lot of the rich by meditations of particular tradesmen, by fables, by songs and by long narratives in alexandrines; sometimes sharply, sometimes humorously, sometimes with an appeal to pathos. Ponçy's silk-weaver finds it ironical that his toil clothes in silk the wives of Croesuses though his own wife goes in rags, and that the motherland like an old coquette takes the devotion of her workmen when she is in danger and then has no milk for them. Lachambeaudie's fables on the subject become increasingly frequent and pointed. Magu in a song touched with bitter drollery comments that the "good Lord" made a mock of him; he had heard about the equality of human lots, but when he arrived upon the scene, there was not a finger's length for him, and his rich neighbor had all the pleasure of pleasantly strolling through life while he had the toil, the blindness from weaving too long hours and poverty to spoil his home. Ponçy's *tapissier* raps out

Du Dieu, de Job et du pauvre, le prêtre
Tout cousu d'or, chante les oraisons.[3]

[1] "All escapes us alas! bread and fruits; to our table
Wine never comes as a merry companion
To shed gaiety; we shiver: The cold
Rushes in the holes of our tatters, and no roof
Where one can for a moment make his face less blue,
Warm his bare feet covered with ice;
It is still very cold, and nothing to cover us,
And we have not eaten: oh, but hunger makes suffering!
Ah! on this small globe the multitude swarms
Yes, the poor are in the way—yet the sap flows in
Grain, vine-roots, woods, fruits and flowers, flax and hemp. We must
Endure hunger, thirst, and cold and heat!
Who then, has cast the lots, designed the division?
This is the cry of the People; it rises, it is lost,
Carried off by the wind, like a noise on the desert."

[2] "But for my part, I have suffered so much, I no longer weep."

[3] "The priest of God, Job and the poor,
Sings the oraisons, all sewed up in gold."

Festeau's alexandrines in a long drawn out tale contrast the usual rich man from his birth surrounded with care, through his middle years of debauchery to his attaining high honors of state not for merit but for name, with the toil-worn artisan of aspirations. With intense and realistic imagery the writer hurls the challenge: What have you done to merit your privileges? Why should you have them more than this other man who has been miserable since his birth, and whose prime of life is spent in toil?

> Plus tard sous l'oeil d'un maître et pour un gain minime,
> Courbé sur le rabot, la pioche ou la lime,
> Il arrache avec peine à ses rudes labeurs,
> Des aliments grossiers détrempés de sueurs;
> Réduit aux fonctions, au rang d'homme-machine,
> Il ne doit pas sentir un coeur en sa poitrine.
> Par malheur, s'il comprend ses droits, sa dignité;
> S'il veut par des talents couvrir sa pauvreté,
> Si le travail mûrit sa mémoire et sa tête,
> Alors l'infortuné! que de maux il s'apprête![1]

All his generous plans meet egotism; his public interest is extinguished by the narrow calculations of others. The law strikes him into silence and incapacity. Everywhere the higher places to which he aspires, go to privilege. Vainly he struggles to rise.

> Abruti par ses maux, vaincu par la misère
> Il vit, vieillit et meurt où végéta son père;
> Rien ne reste de lui, nul ne s'est apercu
> Que Bastien, l'artisan, ait souffert et vècu.[2]

Pathos was an equally favorite method of drawing these contrasts, the style of the *Christmas Carol.* Dickens's tale was the

[1] "Later under the eye of a master and for the tiniest gain
Bent over the plane, the pick or the file,
With pain he tears from his labor
Coarse food drenched with sweat;
Reduced to a tool, to the rank of man-machine
He must not feel a heart in his breast.
If by mischance he understands his rights, his dignity,
If he wills to cover his poverty by his talents,
If his work matures his memory and his head,
Then, wretched one, what ills he brings upon himself."

[2] "Made brutal by his wrongs, conquered by misery
He lives, grows old and dies where his father vegetated.
Nothing is left of him, no one has perceived
That Bastien, the artisan, has suffered and lived."

finest expression, but the poets of the people themselves both in England and France liked the theme. Gerald Massey in *'Twas Christmas Eve* attains a certain amount of effectiveness, though on the whole he is over elaborate in his six stanzas of long-lined, heavy verse, thick with images of gold and silk and jewels where "Wealth's darlings" met and where spirits "rusted", "young hearts were bound by God's chain" while a "skeleton family" agonized because their sons were in jail and gay bells mocked their bitterness. Pierre Dupont's *Le Chanson du Jour de l'An* comes nearer to the kind of appeal Dickens makes. It is the children's festival. Here are the mystery of waiting for the great day, the precipitate rush for bonbons and toys, delighted games with them, wearying of them, coming back to them—drum, trumpet and sword, compass, alphabet and boat. Oh, indeed this laughter is good, and it is the day of the New Year; but

> Dans le jour pâle des mansardes
> Je vois des enfants demi-nus
> Jouer avec de vieilles hardes,
> De petits martyrs inconnus.
> Enfants riches! de leur guenilles
> N'ayez jamais peur en chemin.
> Donnez leur un peu de vos billes,
> Et tendez-leur de votre pain.[1]

Usually these contrasts and pictures of misery are accompanied with some hope, either challenge to the rich to help the poor, or to the poor to help themselves, or assertion of their dignity as workers. Often they are warned that remedies cannot be expected from the government, nor yet in violent outbreaks. They lie in their inner strength. A legend of Dupont makes Jesus appear in strange guise and turn the hall of a rich, selfish countess into a feasting place for poor, wretched men and then remind her that they are her brothers. Or a poor youth in love with the daughter of a baron has discovered the great modern secret that the rich and the poor are

[1] "In the pale light of mansards
I see half-naked children
Play with old rags,
Little, unknown martyrs.
Rich children, of their tatters
Have no fear on the road.
Give them a few of your toys
And reach them some of your bread."

made of the same clay, the lady herself insists that knowledge and work are honors to their ancestral name, and the marriage is accomplished. It is an old theme, the poor hero winning a high-born lady by some special virtue of love or strength, but against the background of its time, its overtones become something new. The new ethical code growing out of the gospel of men's equality was finding expression in verse.

It was in 1846 in Pierre Dupont's *Chant des ouvriers* (*Song of the Workers*) that this early self-realization on the part of the workers found its finest and most popular form. Here is the whole tale of their miseries given in four and a half stanzas. But workers are human none the less; they have passions too and they love beauty and crave the sun and trees. It is they who create marvels for the world, and yet their lives make them machines. But, sings the poet, we must do better after this, for love is stronger than war. In awaiting a better day, let us love each other and drink to the freedom of the world! It was the Saint Simonian spirit: miseries yes, but a better day through love. Even more it was the worker's assertion of his dignity as a human being. It was the heart of Perdiguier's whole life. It was his plea to the government; he tried to get the societies of *compagnonnage* to focus on it instead of meaningless feuds. The worker could love beauty. Why should he not have it just because he was a man? Besides, the world depended on his toil.

In Ponçy's *Chansons de chaque métier,* hardly an artisan in telling of his work fails to mention this wide human significance. The rope-maker ends, "To whom am I not useful? I ask you with pride." The printer understands his share in shattering the ills of ignorance and superstition; the baker is proud of his physical strength and of the fact that he feeds the world; the pastry-cook laughs that his trade is perhaps not the most useful, but at least it is the sweetest, for his cakes celebrate all the precious human fête-days; the watchmaker's trade regulates human existence and, besides, it demands a wonderfully skilled hand; the carpenter delights in building shelter for all humanity and reminds his fellows that Christ, "the divine proletarian", was the son of a carpenter; the foundry-worker thinks of the cannon he builds, the tablet honoring some martyr dead for a holy cause, the works of art that he makes

accessible to the people. Dupont's weaver reconciles himself to ruined eyes and days without sunlight by saying.

> The ship must have sails
> The dead their shrouds, young girls
> Who order their trousseaus from me,
> Must have sheets and layettes.[1]

Here lie the roots of their proud independence and, where the misery was not too great, of their sense of optimism. Even the France of modern industry has kept much of this spirit. In the eighties it was in Daudet's picture of great festivities on the day when a big factory sent out a turbine, and all the workers sang and drank with joy over the great thing they had made, and the cafés resounded with tales of their share in the drama of it. It is the central thought of Pierre Hamp's epic of industry, *Le Peine des hommes.* One finds it in an obscure locksmith in Paris, who in repairing a lock, will show with infinite pride that he has improved on the original. It is unintelligible to the contemporary French factory worker why the Americans rush through piece work at the rate they do; it seems to them to destroy all life. What if the wage is higher? In the forties this long tradition of artisanship was reinforced by the Saint Simonian religion of work. To live was to work, Saint Simon had insisted, and his follower, Lachambeaudie, told the fable of the cloud of incense rising to the sky and meeting a cloud of smoke from the factory; the voice of God was heard saying

> Mêlez-vous fraternellement,
> Toi, du sein du travail, et toi du sanctuaire;
> Vous êtes au Seigneur chères également,
> Car le travail vaut la prière.[2]

The English assertion of the worker's dignity was based on something quite different. The French poets scarcely faced modern factory conditions and the psychological conditions resulting when men become simply the arms or legs of machines, and toil at minute tasks of infinite monotony. They were concerned chiefly with the problem of poverty. Even their utopias often gave pictures of

[1] See *Le Tisserand* in the Appendix.

[2] "Mingle then as brothers,
You from the bosom of toil, and you from the sanctuary,
You are equally dear to the Lord,
For toil is as worthy as prayer."

machine industry in which work had somehow become agreeable because it had been chosen, but with no clear conception of how inevitably the deadening effect of monotony would work. But already the factory system was far enough advanced in England for the brutalization of men on the job to become apparent. It was true that poverty was the central problem; but the men perceived the subtler effects of industry and therefore talked little of a religion of work. Workers were men by virtue of their activity in their organizations which aimed to free them. Their family feelings were signalized, and sometimes their honest workmanship, and they liked to think of "toil ennobled lands." But when Cooper wanted really to impress his readers with the humanity of the factory populations, he told how they joined organizations, how one heard among them profound discussions of ways and means for getting political power, of their relation to the church, of the advisability of using or not using violence. This was a side of the men which Carlyle did not see, and so he had no faith that the working men could solve their own problems. He called for a kind of feudal socialism directed by the intelligent and based on men's finding freedom by obedience to those who know. He preached the gospel of work; the factory hands themselves preached the gospel of combination. It was their only way of standing up as men.

The German Weitling made an effort at synthesis of the English and the French views . He never spoke of machines without horror. He had pages describing the miseries of factory populations in cities. Work for him was "privation," "duty," "burden," "yoke"; it "darkens the charm of life." He looked to the time when a four hour day should relieve this burden. He had a frequent way of symbolizing the new life by joy in food, that is, by escape from the producing process. Nevertheless his reorganization was based on the principle that everybody shall work and he implied that out of work comes knowledge, hence humanness. It is possible that if he had followed out his theory of knowledge further, he might have arrived at the synthesis. As it was, it was too soon for the relationship between the values of the old system of artisanship and the new system of machinery to be clear. Even today the proletariat, both the wing insisting on the Marxian class struggle and the orthodox trade-union wing—seems to have little to offer beyond this notion of enjoyment which is after all a purely middle class notion

which has prevailed in Western Europe since the time when it was Adam's punishment to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow. Those who talk about the "love of work" as the solution are often enough overlooking the fact that artisanship is passing more and more, and the division of labor making work only a deadening grind. It looks as though neither the principle of sanctified work nor of a man's finding his soul in his share in organization were enough in itself. But in any case, the worker writers of the early years of machine industry stated the problem and pointed to as much of a solution as the twentieth century has so far worked out, at least in the West.

But when all over the newly industrialized countries, the poets were first confronted with modern poverty, and the main question was what their fellows were to do about it, they might urge escape or education or organization for fundamental change of society. The escape might be into the enjoyment of nature or of study and this produced poetry like the English William Jones's *The Lowlands Sweet:*

With ceaseless toil the heart grows dull—
Let us go forth, my beautiful,
Rich flow'rs now rise
Our steps to greet;
And sadness flies
The Lowlands sweet.
Hate and discord haunt each street,
Music and love the Lowlands sweet.

The silver cloud it sleeps on high;
The skylark singeth its lullaby;
And the cloud asleep,
And the lark's spread wings,
Are mirrored deep
In the Lowland springs.
Fays and countless beautiful things
Live and love by the Lowland springs.

The Lowland streamlet sparkles clear;
The cuckoo calleth: come, my dear!—
Young lambkins white,
Responsive bleat;
And hearts grow light
In the Lowlands sweet.
The pure may hear the dulcet beat
Of angel steps, in the Lowlands sweet!

What joy—thus, while the lark is loud,
And fairies drop from the silver cloud,
And zephyrs wave
Their taintless wings,
And naiads lave
In lilied springs—
To make some thymy bank our seat,
And talk of love in the Lowlands sweet!

The writer has tried to think of every outdoor loveliness he can, and his feeling is real enough. He has obviously sought other escapes into the world of English masterpieces and drawn on his Shakespeare and Milton and the main romantics for his imagery. Given the horrors of Leicester, it is no wonder that he loved the light of the Renaissance and the pleasant playing with fairies, naiads and love. Cooper's delight in reading the Latin of Caesar and entering into new minds provided a similar release for him. There was Perdiguier's day in the public park with his Voltaire. Moreau was in the same mood when in his poverty and illness in Paris he thought of the sweet stream where he had played as a boy. Twedell and Langland expressed it in a philosophy of freedom: Even in prison they could be free because their minds could roam; and by their minds they could possess the world.

The most usual form of escape presented in workers' poetry was that of their visions of a new world. Just as the American negros' longings for freedom took the form of sweet chariots coming to carry them to a beautiful home across the Jordan and of crowns of glory after death—all of it imagery from Christianity as it had been taught them, the workers' songs of France often yearned toward "the universal congress of peoples," "unanimity," "concord," "peace," the "empire of the people over matter," "the holy laws of future destiny." They dedicated themselves with "exaltation of soul" to bring "sublime creations." They were to be "pilgrims of life lightening each other's burdens by sharing," to speak in "prophetic accents" which should be the "happy presage of joy and honor." It was the religion of progress, and it was rooted in Rousseau's assertion of the goodness of natural man. They saw themselves no longer underdogs, but rulers who lived sublimely. A new Messiah would come to free them. The English poets attained the same exaltation over their destiny by seeing in themselves new Christs born to save men, rewarded by the "bliss" of evangelical

hymn-books and the day when they should rejoice in a new "power of command." "Lift your voices, God is on our side," cried Jones. The influence of Methodism was strong in England. The darkness of martyrdom lay over their faith. It was often accompanied by call to battle, for it was the Christ driving out the money changers whom they saw. The Catholicism of France was never so gloomy, and certainly the new religion of the Saint Simonians, which was that most often articulated by workers, was full of the joy of life. But even the English dreamed of brotherhood and wrote "Cling to each other united and true," trusting in the future when kings should be gone and a child could live happily. Their best expression is in Cooper's *Purgatory of Suicides.*

At the base of this new religion in France lay infinite faith in machine industry. As men's minds had been fired with vast visions in the Renaissance when tales came to them of the discovery of new lands, they were now aflame with thoughts of a world released from the debasement of toil and lifted into the glories of work; of frontiers broken and a war-torn chaos turned into harmony and order —a federation of brothers; of nature—a whole earth—conquered for the uses of man. The days of machine-smashings were over. "Magnificent spectacle," cries Perdiguier before a new railroad bridge and chants his delight with the snorting engine which will bring men's freedom. The frightful agonies in silk-weaving relieved by the Jacquart loom; men working no longer in dark, lonely hovels as Cooper cobbled, but in big airy workshops, ordered evidences of men's cooperative powers; beautiful, planned cities magnificent with the finest architecture of every land; populations reasonably distributed; children well-educated in citizenship; life full of both variety and uniformity—these were the dreams of the sensitive and articulate men of the working-class. In their fragmentary ways they were telling the people hopes that Whitman's great voice gathering power from similar sources soon shouted to America and all the world. Did they prepare the way for his popularity in France?

The best of the manufacturers had caught the glamor of the time and went into their industrial enterprises as the sixteenth century adventurer sought fountains of youth and the El Dorado in the New World. But they lost their bearings on the uncharted waste of competition and of "supply and demand." Only a few bold

spirits like new Columbuses, dared throw the challenge of man's mind to blind economic forces and assert the need and possibility of control. This was the real meaning of the prophets of the new religion and the voices of these workmen poets. They stand sharply differentiated from the upholders of *laissez-faire* on the one hand and of the later materialism of Marx on the other, which really, just as much as the orthodox school of economics, denied the power of the mind to order society.

The actual miseries of the masses in contrast to the beauty of these dreams sharpened the bitterness of their suffering. In England they were angry and hurled fierce invectives at the men who trampled them. In France they chanted the beauties of the new, and at once angry at their wretchedness and fired with hope, they rushed on to a revolution which should bring the day of order and hence of life.

But for long the poets lifted their voices against violence and called their brothers to association. They had seen the futility and horror of the insurrections of Lyons and Paris. A Savinien Lapointe in *L'Emeute* did not soften the picture:

> De clameurs, de bruit sourd, de cris tumultueux
> Tout croule autour de nous, tout gronde, tout murmure
> Tout tremble, tout languit.
> Le vent des passions arrache, tue, emporte.
> * * * *
> Les agitations, les luttes, les colères
> L'intrigue soulevant des vagues populaires,
> De graves étourdis amassant autour d'eux
> De tout aveuglement les groupes ténébreux
> Aux coins des carrefours vont embusquer l'émeute
> Qui court, aboie et mord comme une sombre meute.[1]

[1] Clamors, dull noise, tumultuous cries
All is crumbling about us, all roars, all murmurs,
All trembles and languishes,
The wind of passions tears its way, kills, carries away.
. . . . . .
Agitations, struggles, furies,
Intrigues stirring up the waves of the people,
Grave madmen amassing about them
Dark groups of every blindness,
At the corners of squares are going to let loose the riot
That runs, barks, bits like a sombre pack of hounds.

Brothers, do not dry up your souls in insurrection, he cries. I know that hunger is a powerful trap. But insurrection is pitiable. We have wept over dead, torn soldiers; while the great have punished the insurrections of Paris and Lyons with scaffolds, I have spread flowers on graves. Oh, let us end this! Oh, great ones, hear the people! They would bless you if you loved them.

Certainly poets suggest that it is not surprising for the people to break out in riots. When they do, they are like a dog breaking loose from his chains and leaping upon the cruel ones who have exasperated him while chained, and they should not be punished by legislators as if they were to blame. It is true too that their heroism of despair merits reverence from those left behind. Moreau sings it for the fallen heroes of the insurrection of 1832 in an elegy of exquisite comprehension. But he warns against violence in his *Dixhuit Cent Trente-six* and urges the new weapon of the nineteenth century:

> Forgeron laisse sur l'enclume
> Le fer vengeur inachevé:
> L'arme du siècle c'est la plume.[1]

Poem after poem centers on the new influence of the printing press. The people can read now and know. Let them free themselves.

In general not much is expected of the rich or those in power in the government. The deputies according to Lachambeaudie buzz around forever in a circle and, for all their debates, never advance the affairs of the people a single step, for all the world like a cockchafer on a string flying round and round in circles. Or they are all in wild confusion and no one listens until suddenly everybody dashes from his chair tormented by an important care—dinner awaits him outside. No, such legislators are not concerned with other people's need to live. The people must act themselves. If they are now miserable, betrayed after the Revolution of 1830, it is to some extent because of their own folly. Such is the implication of the fable of the miller, the ass and the farmer. Freed of the miller and grazing happily in open pastures, the ass let himself be persuaded by the farmer who came along with pleasant words of protection,

[1] "Smith, leave unachieved on the forge the avenging steel: The weapon of the century is the pen."

food and holidays, and found himself once more bearing overheavy burdens and beaten to trot after oats stuck in front of him out of reach on the pole of the cart.

> Je connais tel État sur un point de la sphère
> A qui de ce pauvre âne on fait subir le sort.[1]

ends the fablist with his sly suggestion that the people might well cease flopping its ears. Ponçy, Perdiguier, most of the journals called on the workmen to know, to face their own weakness, their real needs, their place in the world's history and to think out practical schemes of remedy.

The poets understood that plenty of obstacles to the growth of a strong working class lay in the people themselves. It was often necessary to warn them that large wealth and glorious worldly position were not the aims for which they were struggling, that the problem was much deeper than a mere shift of possession of things. Sometimes they are reminded that progress comes slowly and only by small steps through centuries so that they must not be disappointed if they do not see immediate results from their efforts. They must be clear sighted in seeing who is really their friend, and who will betray them, else they may find themselves destroyed as the doves were, who were tricked by a seemingly friendly hawk. Nor must they be angry with wise critics who disapprove of some of their policies. It all goes back to the insistence that they must make themselves more enlightened. But there is another fundamental challenge to them again and again: They must really mean to live the practical implications of their beautiful words, brotherhood and equality. Lachambeaudie urged that when they have some good fortune lifting them out of misery, they should not forget their brothers left behind as the sparrow did who gluttonously gobbled cherries while his brother was dying of starvation instead of carrying some to him; nor should they exercise over them an even more terrible tyranny than the masters who started powerful, like the pedestrian from the country who was shocked at a rich driver whipping his horse and who, when he himself was driving a few years later, treated his horse so much more cruelly that he was arrested for violence. Any one who has seen some unworthy officials of labor unions to-day juggling for personal power at the expense

[1] "I know a certain state on a point of the globe
Which has been made to undergo the lot of the poor ass."

of the rank and file or who has heard New York clothing workers insist that the worst employers are the ones who have come over in the steerage and worked their way up to factory ownership, will realize the significance of this insistence of the poets of the '40's. Lachambeaudie marked the place of another pitfall by a fable of well-aimed humor: A leopard comes to a fox and says there will be a great feast given by the lion, for all are brothers and equal; the fox delightedly accepts, crying, 'Long live equality! Still we shall not admit to our festivities, I hope, the dirty pig nor the shameless monkey."

Reboul's alexandrines fulminated against the same weakness: Modern men who have made slaves of themselves by overturning God, have become the plague of their race, for the will to dominate and to enjoy themselves idly is at the bottom of their hearts, the sorrow of their brothers is really part of their happiness and talk of equality is insincere. The people who preach it, he argued, are merely dissatisfied with the present distribution of things and want a change out of the purely selfish desire to have a larger share themselves. He scorned a theory which in practice revealed so-called idealists forgetting the misery at their doors the moment they came into power. Certainly reforms are needed, he admitted; but the tradition of revolution is wrong. Let change come through love, not hatred. Out of the storms and lightnings he heard the voice of God commanding that the earth a second time be a desert, for men have disobeyed His law. In one of those ironies of incomprehension he lashed Lamennais as one of these base overturners of society because the one time priest had left the church, but meanwhile Lamennais in his *Le Livre du Peuple* was warning the workingmen of the very danger of insincerity in motives that Reboul saw so clearly. Harsh as the southern poet's attack was, it must be admitted that he did see with rare penetration certain unfortunate elements in the movement—elements which in fact helped to wreck the Revolution when it came and delegation after delegation of various trades crowded the Luxembourg to get their particular desires attended to at once regardless of the needs of the whole.

More often the writers believed that the stirrings of the people presaged new life for civilization. "Do not be discouraged at anything," writes Perdiguier. "If civilization sometimes sinks, it is to rise again; after centuries of ignorance, come centuries of knowl-

edge; after times of moral decadence and disgust, times of investigations and renovations. May we now be entering upon a new era? One would think so! . . . The workingman after having lived under oppression is standing erect; he is coming out of a kind of sleep; he is feeling of himself; he is examining himself; he is realizing himself as a man as much as one can be so; he is disturbed over his condition; he is analyzing his environment; he is thinking; he is reading; he is writing; and this is what I call a happy and important symptom."

It was on this new development of their own thought and expression that many of the worker-writers counted for the ultimate emancipation of their class. Many of the poets wrote for them with the avowed intent of teaching. Lachambeaudie's fables always had a moral attached. Magu advised Gilland to "imitate Perdiguier whose desire to enlighten his brothers makes him preach to them union and the love of justice," and Gilland's whole life was devoted to exactly this task of enlightenment. In a song, *Aux Ouvriers maçons, le jour de notre fête patronale, l'Ascension* in *Le Chantier* Ponçy sings

> Et, pour consolider cet avenir naissant,
> N' épargnons ni nos bras, frères, ni notre sang.
> Instruisons nous; les maux sont fils de l'ignorance.
> Travaillons: le travail donne l'independance.
> Amis, je ne suis pas un de ces insensés
> Qui prèchent le labeur avec les bras croisés,
> Mon travail me nourrit et mon plus noble éloge
> C'est le bruit sourd que fait ma truelle dans l'auge.
>
> Le soir, quand vous voyez s'envoler tour à tour
> Sur les flots du tabac, les fatigues du jour,
> Que des livres choisis de science et d'histoire
> De leurs trésors féconds ornent votre memoire;
> Puisez-y le secret de vos droits; les tyrans
> Ne foulèrent jamais que des fronts ignorants.
> L'ignorance enraya le char de l'industrie,
> Oh, cultivons l'étude, aimons bien la patrie,
> Songeons que sur la mer des mondes en travail
> Du vaisseau du Progrès Dieu tient le gouvernail.[1]

[1] "To strengthen this dawning future, let us spare neither our arms nor our blood, brothers. Let us inform ourselves; evils are the children of ignorance. Let us work: work gives independence. Friends, I am not one of those senseless people who with their arms crossed, preach work;

Perdiguier in his *Le Livre du compagnonnage* urged not only unity, but education. His own life had been tireless in the pursuit of knowledge. His thought and his style in all his writings show the grasp of the problems of his time of a widely read and well informed man. He suffered from the weakness of the church-ridden old education to which he had been exposed for a short time as a child, with its emphasis on Latin and on French classics of no significance to workers. Now he urged workmen to establish a school and a library, and outlined a plan of his own for it: The schools should teach trades and should have models and designs for each one; they should also provide for general culture. The libraries should include a variety of books:

History: Bossuet's *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle* to show how great empires have fallen, one after the other.
A history of France.

Geography: A book which should make us understand the grandeur of the earth, its varieties and physical, political and moral transformations.
Also a dictionary of geography.

Encyclopedia: One which would give ideas on mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, botany, agriculture, machines, arts and crafts, philosophy, literature, etc.
The one directed by Pierre Leroux and Jean Reynaud is incomparable, but it is too scholarly for us; the one published by Courtin is better.

Literature: "works which strike the imagination, lift thought and form taste."
The Iliad, Odyssey, Aeneid; Jerusalem Delivered; Paradise Lost; Fenélon's *Télémaque;* the works of Corneille, Racine, Molière, Voltaire, Ducis; bits of Boileau, LaFontaine, Rousseau, Bernardin de Saint Pierre.
Also living authors such as Chateaubriand, Béranger, Lamartine, Casimir Delavigne, Hugo and Sand.

Political writings of our age: Lamennais, Cormenin, Auguste Luchet.

my toil feeds me, and my highest praise is the dull noise that my trowel makes in the mortar.

"In the evening, when you see the fatigues of the day float away one by one on the waves of tobacco, let choice books of science and history adorn your memory with their fruitful treasures; draw from them the secret of your rights; tyrants never trampled other than ignorant brows. Ignorance has held back the chariot of industry. Oh, let us cultivate study, let us love our country well, let us reflect that on the sea of worlds in travail, God holds the helm of the ship of Progress."

Magasin Pittoresque: "a moral work, scholarly but simple, varied and decorated with drawings. It is sold at a most moderate price."

His scheme was sufficiently comprehensive. It was an artisan's dream—it was still of use to teach trades. It tried to comprehend the best of the culture of the classes who had hitherto been in power, and it recognized the need of simplifying intricate knowledge for workers. It contains in a nutshell the problems confronting workers' education today, mainly in its insistence that he is a worker and must be trained as such. He must know something of science, of the grandeur and variety of the earth, of the history of man, of the masterpieces of his imagination. He must understand other times, and other lands than his own. But first of all he must know his trade. The problem was too new for Perdiguier to have thought through all the implications, and in the expression of his theory general culture is not integrated with the life of industry as in his own life it was. But in a day when the struggle was still one to get free of the church and the classics, he was far advanced.

A movement was growing to make some practical schooling possible for the workers. In Paris before 1830 twelve schools for adult workers had been started. In 1819 the Conservatory of Arts and Crafts was established to encourage the application of science to industry, in 1829 the Central School of Arts and Manufactures. The Revolution of 1830 swept away some of these, but the idea persisted, and modern education has felt its influence.

In England in the twenties night classes had been held for workers for which they paid their own fees and used their own pamphlets, for the men saw no hope in either the Church schools which were identified with reactionary interests, or the Chapel schools which were concerned only with the Bible and heaven. The leaders of the movement for a press free of taxation, begun in 1830, who were also the leaders of the Chartist movement, aimed for a national secular education. Mechanics' Institutes more and more afforded the workers opportunities. Thomas Cooper was instrumental in starting one in Lincoln in 1834 and taught in several for many years. The bulletins of lectures show that they covered almost every imaginable subject—scientific discoveries, literature of many ages and countries, languages, especially French, for many workmen were interested in revolutionary developments in France; re-

ligion—Strauss's *Life of Jesus* was expounded and they heard of modern rationalism; politics of France, various forms of organization like cooperatives and utopian communities. Men like Lovett tried to establish libraries and lecture-halls in London and to open the British Museum to workers on Sundays. In 1840 the Owenites turned an old workroom into a lecture hall which was called a "Hall of Science" and here men like the secularist leader Holyoake explained science on Sundays, men who were missionaries under Owen's Association of All Classes and All Nations. Here were the beginnings of the education among the workers which has made it true that many an Oxford graduate who today goes north among them, is astonished at their knowledge and thoughtfulness. Cooper threw his energies into the movement after realizing the futility of Chartist violence, as the surest and soundest way for the workers to gain power and the chance of life. Sympathetic men and women of the middle class helped workers' educational movements from the beginning.

Among the workmen who wrote there seem to have been three stages of educational theory. First they wanted to know what the upper classes knew. This was Cooper's search in the earliest years of his study. Then they felt some need of directing their knowledge toward industry and arrived at the stage of adding trades on to the rest of the studies, a principle which underlay Perdiguier's outline and which today finds wide application. But in groping toward elimination of the futile, they were moving toward a third stage of even more searching importance. They suggested the classification of knowledge into the necessary, the useful and the pleasant, and their educational schemes included these degrees and in this order. In France, Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* though not the expression of a man still working at his trade, does nevertheless articulate a worker's dream, and his plan sounds like a page straight out of Rousseau with its insistence on direct contact with things. The aim was to "form good workers, good parents, good citizens and real men," and the plan provided for elementary education for all—with reading, writing, drawing, natural science, arithmetic (taught by practical measurements in shops), music, the elements of agriculture, mechanics and industry as the content; no foreign languages, for most people would have no occasion to use them and translations could give the ideas, no religion and divinity until after

the students were grounded in these other matters. This was to be followed by professional education to fit the young man or woman for whatever particular kind of work he should choose—and all were to work at some trade, both men and women. The cardinal tenets were that education should train children from early childhood to love and esteem work, and that it should by a system of self-government teach them morality in action.

Weitling arrived at the conclusion that was implied in the French theories. He had no such practical educational plan as Perdiguier or Cabet; he was German enough to go rather into the metaphysics of knowledge and his whole new society was based on his philosophy of knowledge. Unlike Cooper or Perdiguier he did not believe that the dawn of the new day could wait for the enlightenment of all —that would be impossible in a system where inequality of opportunity prevailed. The revolution must be brought about mainly through an appeal to self interest. But in his new organization of society the basis was to be knowledge. All must work and all must have the opportunity to know. Government must be administered by those who know most. This is straight from Saint Simon. But worker that he was, Weitling gave it a turn not so aristocratic as in the case of Saint Simon, and he articulated what is at the root of modern talk of creativeness in industry and indeed some modern theories of knowledge and education. "In the state of society at its highest point of perfection, all work will be a branch of knowledge, hence every perfection of a kind of work is knowledge if it had need of the preceding idea. As a mason improved himself with the knowledge of the architect and the painter with that of the chemist, even so this can be the case in a similar way in every other craft, and therefore every branch of work will be a form of knowledge when ideas are associated with it." Evidently this would end the separation between intellectuals and handworkers, the search for escape and merely futile cobwebs of knowledge. It would be rooted in the realities of daily life, and daily life could take on the significance which only knowledge could give. Weitling speaks like Cabet of necessary knowledge—that without which society cannot progress and which will bring the redemption of society; useful knowledge—all that which works for the good of society; and pleasant knowledge—all that which guarantees ease, content and support of society through its ideas as much as through their prac-

tical working out. All else is useless. He will have none of this fine speaking and superfine feeling—he thinks it like cardplaying and dancing, useless from any social point of view. It has been the pride of past social organisms and has grown out of their tyranny. Let mankind turn to the business of social well-being henceforth and not selfish cultivation.

He defines three branches of knowledge—that of healing, in which he includes "the whole physical and spiritual nature of man, his bodily and spiritual weaknesses and illnesses and the knowledge of their extermination. The greatest philosophers will then be at once physicians and moral teachers, and their task the healing of all ailments of body and soul; for these last will cease to be called crimes." That of Physics, "knowledge of the forces of nature and the study of how to turn them to the welfare of mankind," and he includes here agriculture, mining, heating of buildings, supervision of raw materials. Finally that of mechanics, "the complete understanding of the theory and practice of each of the different hand and machine trades"—it is especially the knowledge of how to bring much to pass with small strength. Knowledge of all these branches, which tries to bring ideas given through them into an harmonious order, is philosophy. It is philosophy which holds the helm of government.

"Each branch of work on the pinnacle of its perfection when it guarantees to ideas a sphere of activity, becomes knowledge." Something like a century after Weitling we have schools of philosophy making similar assertions, and theories of education looking toward a society in which this should be realized. The question now is how far the class-consciousness which began to express itself in the thirties and which has come to be the dominant factor in social life today, can develop this concept which some of its pioneers stated.

More than they sang of escape or than they analyzed schemes for education, the workmen who wrote, preached to their comrades that they must win their right to life by combinations among themselves. It was this which was left out of the debris of the Revolution of 1848 and which came to be the main expression of workers' consciousness during the second half of the century. There were few pictures of actual organizations; manifestoes certainly, but not tales of the inner life of trade unions or French secret societies, naturally enough, for the worker would not have dared to reveal

the fact that he had knowledge of them or their functioning. It was only middle class writers who could touch the subject. It is to *Mary Barton* and *Alton Locke* and Reade's later *Put Yourself in His Place* that we must turn in England for the drama of this aspect of class consciousness, or as early as 1839 to *Ernest, or Political Regeneration,* a long poem hailed by the *Quarterly Review*[1] as "the Chartist epic" but clearly not written by a workman. Its author was perhaps Ernest Jones seeing in himself the character of one of the protagonists, a nobleman's son converted to the new political doctrines which are the main interest of the poem. It was issued anonymously and soon withdrawn from circulation. By 1851, Ernest Jones, who had been a leader of Chartism through its years of battle, though himself neither a workman nor self-educated, was so angry at the débâcle of O'Connor's leadership, that he published serially in his paper, *Notes to the People,*[2] a novel called *The History of a Democratic Movement, Compiled from the Journal of a Democrat, the Confessions of a Demagogue, the Minutes of a Spy.* Though the author disclaimed any intent to portray personalities, the events and language are too nearly identical with O'Connor's life, writings and speeches to leave much doubt about the original of Simon de Brassier, the hero.[3]

But in France Perdiguier's *Le Livre du compagnonnage* at once revealed to the nation at large the inside activity of one system of organization and challenged the members to make it a force for gaining the workers their rightful place in society. The first edition created a furor among the members—the author had betrayed their secrets. No end was too bad for him. But gradually his book won its way with them, for there was sense in what he urged. In the second edition he dared to come out even more boldly than in the first in insisting that they sink old strife and organize for effective action in the present. It is a curious document, rather like an almanac in its variety of material—addresses to his society, useful information aimed to direct the workers' thought to study and improvement in their crafts, notes on geometry and architecture given in the form of a dialogue, a discussion of trade agreements, the

[1] *Quarterly Review*, vol. 65, pp. 153-193, Dec. 1839-March 1840.

[2] *Notes to the People*, vol. I, London, 1851.

[3] Gammage in his *History of the Chartist Movement*, pp. 359-366, gives an analysis of the parallel between de Brassier and O'Connor.

whole history of the feuds of *compagnonnage* and the working of the societies. His *Mémoires* later gave much of the same material in more interesting form as part of the drama of his own life.

Much of the first volume was also given over to a collection of songs including some written by himself and accompanied by notes which suggested his ideas about the whole system. In the first edition he quoted some of those common among the men—songs of hatred and violence, which he declared, caused many of the bloody battles between different organizations, and they are crude and raw indeed. He gives many of those which he hopes to substitute. They range in subject matter from the story of the Babylonian captivity to the glory of cabinet-making and of life as a member of a *devoir* and the adventure of the "tour of France," from the sadness of lovers parting in Spring as one of them goes off on his tour, to the slightness of any vows of love compared to those given a man's *devoir,* from contrasts between the contented life of a good workman and the bored anxiety of a rich man, to vast hopes for "union and progress," a great new life of the spirit brought to pass by brotherly alliance of all the *devoirs.* In the second edition, Perdiguier drops all the songs of hate and keeps these of unity. He adds many that were written by different companions. They are heavy with abstractions like liberty, progress, union, equality, reform, peace. They are significant as showing as Perdiguier's life showed, the fullness of consciousness among the men and their vision of association.

He reinforces this plea in his *Biographie de l'Auteur du livre du compagnonnage* of 1846, by urging the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and warning the men that if one of them becomes great he must serve. He tells them that misery is increasing in England where "the *Times* tells of poor people gnawing rotten bones, in Belgium where the papers comment on the bitterness of the war between the farmers and wretched workers become vagabonds who steal the crops; in Germany where the starving people fight so bitterly against the export of grains that armies are necessary on the frontier . . ." It is obviously not "enough that they should join in France; their sympathy must penetrate Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland. For all men are brothers. Would that we could get away from speaking so many different languages and that workers of all lands might understand each other." The

songs which he wrote for the second edition of his *Livre du compagnonnage* were full of these ideas. The workers' almanacs again and again printed such verse, especially the Fourierist almanac of the *Démocratie Pacifique*. Lachambeaudie's fables preached the beauties of association and the necessity of sinking differences of opinion.

Most of the literary expression of this association was in terms of utopias, and generally religious in tone. Ponçy's *Union: A Call to the People* is typical. It is full of the phrases which would move them most and appeals to them with several long figures from nature. The swallows gather in flocks; the single flower, exposed to storm, droops and dies; it is only the mass that can live and bring a new day, and moreover the masses of all countries united. The sun of liberty is rising; if its fire is to make fruitful the seed of truth sowed in us by God, we must help by our inspired hymn of concord. It will be always one song, but only the more beautiful through repetition. "God will bring our holy hopes to accomplishment;" "with unions as shields and virtues as swords" let us march toward the future. "Triumph is at the end."

Every such poem was needed, for Fourierists were divided from Saint Simonians; republicans from both; one group of carpenters from another, one secret society from another; so-called democrats from so-called communists and socialists. Different grades of workers scorned each other. It looked often as if no concerted action from the workmen could ever be expected to overturn the wretched government that left fundamental problems unsolved and to control the powerful industrials who, though they were certainly adding to the wealth of the nation, more and more lost sight of the human values which might be sacrificed in the process. The worker-poets were as frank as outsiders to recognize these conflicts among themselves and warn their people. There is scarcely one who does not in some way remind them that they are the "holy militia" or that they must be willing to join even communists for these are their brothers, and only so can the fruits of the earth be the reward of their "sacred toil."

These voices had increasing influence in preparing the working men to join with other forces and produce action, especially in France where the national life afforded a peculiarly fruitful soil at the moment. We have spoken of the astonishing outburst of

workers's journals during the forties. Besides these, volumes appeared. The Saint Simonians printed Lachambeaudie's *Fables* and the volume was sure to be found on almost any workman's shelf along with Eugene Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* and perhaps a life of Napoleon. Perdiguier's first book was paid for by subscriptions of two francs sent by some two hundred fifty companions, and its songs were sung by them all over France. He himself journeyed through the provinces to preach his doctrines of unity and association, and he reached others through the newspaper of which he was one of the editors. Many volumes of verse and some autobiographical tales were printed, usually with eulogies by some great writer of the time, and found their way among the workmen. It is significant that so much of the verse is in the form of songs, for this was the most effective way of all to reach the men. The Saint Simonians changed Sunday orgies into meetings for singing. Pierre Dupont sang his songs long before they were printed, and indeed like Béranger could have done without a printer. Night after night workers filled the old stable which had been turned into a meeting-place, stormed with enthusiasm over his full voice and his dramatic gestures, and then carried his new songs to every workman's café in Paris. All this gathering expression of poverty, this assertion of the workman's importance, these visions of a wonderful new world coincided with the industrial depression of 1847 and more terrible misery than France had hitherto seen, with governmental indifference and incapacity, with middle class agitation for reform and similar belief in the new religion. The cult of the Great Revolution reached its height at the same time, and the Revolution of 1848 broke.

The whole literary movement leaves the reader of today with the feeling of the grandeur of the simple worker and the movement toward class-consciousness which was gathering under all the miseries and mistakes of the time. It was as Jasmin saw in his *The People*:

> "After a quarter of a century of glory and pain, the great people drained and sold to tyrants, on the faith of two kings, slept fifteen years. But one day, awakened by the noise of their chains, unhappy, shackled, they unbound themselves; and suddenly they made their lion's force felt. Of course their enemies sounded the tocsin with the great bell; but to break a

feudal seat in pieces, to destroy the fruit of fifteen years of toil, what did they need? The third of a week.

"And there they stand terrible, paving block in hand, masters, masters of all, who in their fever forget their cares of yesterday for the joy of tomorrow. They pass by gold without noticing it, and counting on the new oath made them, they, so much deceived by kings, what do they dream again of taking? A king! And you, are you not touched by such grandeur of soul, you ministers who forever cite eighty-nine? No. You always think they are plotting the ruin of the State or of your repose.

"Men of the rear! The people are better than you others. They want nothing of the state but one reward: Liberty, grand and without license; they want justice, at the bottom as at the top; they want no more governments of holy water sprinklers; they want their king never to stoop before kings; they want a government to love those who gave it birth; and when you draw a sword from its sheath they want at least some one on the tribune to occupy himself with them. For they are no more ragged and savage wretches whose wrongly turned minds dream only of pillage. They are a valiant people who are enlarging their heritage, but with the fruit of their toil. See them getting up at daybreak, ennobling the fields, the woodyards, the factories. Their arms guided by their genius endow and enrich France.

"Princes who want honey must protect the bee. He who spades the tree at the foot makes the top flower. Hear the truth! It is in our words—Open your eyes to see it, and be deaf no longer! For the people hold the book and know that their first duty is to be men in order to be free. This duty they will accomplish. They swear it by the Three Days. If you want to be tyrants, if you want them slaves, they will die as masters. Woe, hundred times woe to whoever shall deceive them! What they did in July tells you what they will do!"

The verse of those days of revolution sang the dominance of the proletarian, the glory of the republic and the brotherhood of peoples. Pierre Dupont was the singer of the Revolution of 1848 as Béranger had been of 1830. Like the crowds pouring into the Chamber of Deputies and the city-hall, he was for the moment swept with exaggeration of delight in the strength which had brought the Republic and the apparent realization of the dreams of the last twenty years. Songs celebrating the Republic seemed to tumble out during the months of 1848. Now it was "radiant like a new Christ," now the stern warrior to conquer tyrants, now the bearer of the olive branch; now giving heart to the poor of France by its justice, now

protection to Poland, Italy and Germany struggling for their freedom; now having displaced the divine right of kings by the divine voice of the ballot by which the ideal is to become incarnated. The task is simple, he said, we must love it and support it; the rich man is the brother of the poor.

We are not allowed to forget that it is the proletarian who is freed. *Les deux Compagnons du Devoir,* with the rollicking pleasure of two workmen in wine and their dashing love for the republic, notes their sound good sense as they reflect on who is to be trusted with the government. No fine-sounding reasoning shall trick them, or false workers who will only deny them when they get to the Assembly. Their gay chorus marches them through the land and also into the hearts of two bar-maids:

Où marches-tu, gai compagnon?
Je m'en vais conquerir la terre;
J'ai remplacé Napoléon,
Je suis le prolétaire![1]

And at the holiday of the Champs de Mars the honor is not to implements of war but to the tools of the workman.

But the Republic was threatened and for once the poet was torn out of his usual dreams of peace and love, or the gaiety of the newly freed worker imagining an easy Napoleonic domination of his own. He sang a fierce joy in violence believing that it was "the death rattle of kings" that he heard. Followed the hot tragedy of betrayed belief that the Republic would have saved Europe; visions of orgies of fires and abuse of women; and then the challenge to the soldiers to stop this horror. They were dreams no less grand than those of Russia's revolution. But Forty-eight learned that the means and the end cannot be separated; the Revolution was not ready; wars to end tyranny ended in tyranny and reaction. Dupont's anger vanished, and he was left to sing the funeral song of the *Les Journées de Juin.* The sons of France lost in those four bitter days and nights, the "wind of battles" tearing through the city, brutal cannon vomitting a furance of metal—how natural it all was, but how futile! Brothers killed or put into prison! May the Republic show mercy!

[1] "Where are you going, companion so gay?
Going to conquer the earth and sky,
The place of Napoleon is mine today,
The new proletarian am I."

Then disillusion, the *coup d'état,* prison, exile, chance for realization of the dream gone. Yet Perdiguier in Switzerland, longing for France, sad that his fellow-workmen made no sign, nevertheless kept his faith that by education and association the people would win its heritage in society. Pierre Dupont barely escaping exile and living in retirement at Lyons seems not to have been bitter or overwhelmed. The preface to the 1861 edition of his poetry says simply and confidently: ". . . certainly whether the people sings well or ill, whether its poets rhyme all wrong, whether its tribunes or its philosophers dispute to the point of unintelligibility, whether its defenders compromise it, progress will not make one step the less for all of that and the truth will be disentangled from chaos.

"Simple, strong men, those who work and those who make people live, have entered the city and have asserted their right to moral and intellectual life. The word tyrant becomes ridiculous because the thing can no longer be conceived, and because it is a monstrosity destined to perish like evil.

"The muses smile; after the cries of war, freed peoples shall rest in harmony.

"Science creates and becomes fruitful; agriculture shall feed all men; industry and general economy will make human relations easier and life more sweet. The arts which always tend to uplift the soul, will bind the earth to the movement of heaven. Those who have been judged the most gross, will enter into theories as much as the fine minds. Genesis says that man is made in the image of God: is it not time at last that God be manifest in man and that by a supreme effort we resolve the problem of our destiny?"

The literary movement of the workers went on until about 1855. Their journals were mostly suppressed in 1850 when freedom of the press was limited. But Ponçy's *Chansons de chaque Métier* was published in that year. Lapointe's stories like *Daniel, le Vagabond* continued to give the noble proletarian. Various narratives in similar form appeared like Masson's *Les contes d'atelier.* In 1854 Perdiguier's *Mëmoires* were published, and editions of Jasmin continued. Pierre Dupont's songs came out in a complete volume in 1855 and ran into several editions.

The influence of the French movement was felt in both England and Germany. In England after 1848, and then events told more than worker's writings though it is true that Pierre Dupont's songs

got across the Channel. His *Song of Bread* was translated by Ernest Jones and printed in *Notes to the People,* and the *Song of the Workers* appears in an English translation in a pamphlet of *Revolutionary Rhymes and Songs for Socialists* used at meetings in 1886. Gerald Massey was influenced by the Revolution of 1848 more than by any other single event, and has a whole series of poems called *Hopes of 1848,* and another series in which he lashed Louis Napoleon and England for encouraging him. Cooper's *Journal* of 1850 often printed articles explaining what was happening in France and an occasional letter from a French workman commenting favorably on the revolution. The note of hope was high for the moment among these radicals of England who had not yet been more than a minority.

Pierre Dupont's social and political songs were translated into German in Hamburg. But even more important from the point of view of the workers' literature of class-consciousness was the influence of the whole French movement from its source to its culmination on William Weitling and on Marx and Engels. Though their own country had not gone far industrially, these Germans, under French influence, expressed fully the class-consciousness of the utopians and the new, sterner sort that was to dominate the second half century.

During Weitling's years in Paris, he gathered the material for his *Guarantieen der Harmonie und der Freiheit* which, when published in Switzerland in 1842, created such a sensation among the workmen of Germany that the Paris brothers of his society compared it with that made by Strauss's *Life of Jesus,* and Feuerbach in a burst of feeling cried how trivial the whole crowd of academicians seemed in comparison with this noble tailor. Weitling was animated by an urge no less driving than Carlyle's to bring order out of chaos. His educational theory was part of a whole reorganization of society to be brought by the workmen themselves.

According to the *Guarantieen,* man is good. His aim is happiness and happiness is harmony, proportion between means and end, between desires and capacities. It is freedom, but freedom is again the harmony between willing, being able to do and doing. This is the supreme aim of society and not production, not money. Such in substance is the principle of Weitling's analysis of society as of those of all the other utopians. His story of history is like that of

Rousseau in his Second Discourse. In his early stages, man was happy and at peace, for he had everything he needed. But property came, inheritance, then wars, slavery, exchange and hence the importance of money, nations, armies, until today the toilers of the world live in misery. They are mere things tossed on the rubbish heap when they grow old: "Now they are flayed till they bleed, in order that profit can be made from their strength; and when they get sick and grow old and weak, then they are chased out of the workshop, the factory and their houses, so that they will not have to be supported any more, and others stand outside in masses and press into the torture-cages out of which one sacrifice after another staggers, so soon as their strength is used up."

And yet some few who are rich live in ease. None of the proletarian writers is so powerful as Weitling in his pictures of contrasts between the rich and the poor. He storms against the free walk of the rich man and the trembling bearing of the poor; the sour look of the face of the one, the sad look on the other's; the honor given to fine clothes and stupidity in contrast to the scorn of brains and poor clothes. Here the jewels for the women in the fine world, there no covering for a sick child in winter; here palaces, there damp, dark, stinking corners. With passion as hot as that of the English and with surer imagery he cries, "Ah, how they weep, groan, wail and moan in their obscure rooms, these poor unfortunate creatures and no help for them! How they twist and turn on their bed of want while up there joy rustles in velvet and silk clothes. Here the heart-breaking cry of despair, there the wild jubilation of extravagance."

He sweeps the whole history of early slavery for his symbols of the miseries of the modern world: What hypocrisy to talk about the freedom of today! The slaves of old lived human lives in comparison. Men used to be forced to lose their souls; today they sell themselves, they commit crimes, they despise honest toil, they marry for money, they debase themselves in wild speculations and conflicts between debtors and creditors; the masters and apprentices fight ceaselessly. Money, money, money, let it be accursed! "The prince and the robber, the merchant and the thief, the lawyer and the traitor, the priest and the charlatan, all shriek money." Let us have no more pretty phrases. I will show you what the reality is, he says. "Let us call a thief a thief and not a speculator, a bankrupt,

a shopkeeper, a distrainer, a tax-gatherer, a rogue." "All that you name crime and punish as such you praise under another name when it is on the other side." "You do not murder, but your armies and navies, your munitions factories, your prisons? The damp cellars of the poor, their unwholesome food which is what is left them from your social order, does this not spread murder?" He says he shudders as he writes these pictures for they are his own experience. We shudder with him. These are the real sufferings of Paris in those years before 1848.

He tries to find the cause. He searches history; he analyzes present day competitive social organization. It is all very simple. The poor have not enjoyed the earth because mine and thine got introduced into the world. Nature said: Here are lands and fruits. Let each take what he needs. Agriculture made the earth produce more, yet millions starve for bread. This is because "mine and thine" had entered into man's life. Transportation developed, especially railroads and steamships, but the poor walk, because of mine and thine. Writing, printing, the telegraph came, yet many have the truth and dare not speak because of mine and thine. Machines were made which centupled man's power, yet men work day and night, and toil more than before because of mine and thine. Nature said, You have all my riches, organize yourselves with wise judgment. Christ and the early martyrs, died for this, but it is not enough, for mine and thine corrupt the world.

See what a stupid waste all this "mine and thine" brings. Come with me to any country market day. See the peasants, each in his own wagon bringing in cheeses. But not so many cheeses are wanted; prices for all of them are inadequate and some must laboriously carry them back again. That is what all this self-interest and competition do. Or see industry "like an iron bodice crushing the tender forms of children." See the strange ideals of mothers for their daughters: They "give themselves the greatest trouble to inculcate the notion of idleness and stupid pride in their small geese, and these then would not for any price look for a husband among handworkers so long as they have any hope of getting any other; and why? Because of the disdain which is attached to a workman's position; because of money which others can gain with less trouble."

Why should it be otherwise in a society of insecurity and wretchedness? Nor are the rich to be blamed wholly either. They do not

know. We, brothers, should be as they if we were in their places. It is their environment which makes them—the wrong organization of society. If the value of money were defined in terms of so many hours of work, these evils would not have occurred. If society were so organized that all should work and all should have opportunity to harmonize their desires and their capacities, we should have real men. Contrast the "pretty dolls and the will-less machines" that men are today with the noble, strong men of the creation. Come, brothers, rise. There will be long years of darkness, when mothers' hearts will break over their children and many will be robbed of life in bitter toil. But the future presses behind.

When getting a livelihood from pasture and wild fruits of the earth became difficult, man thought of a way to make earth more fruitful. This was agriculture. He rooted up thistles, drained swamps, cleared away stones, planted seed and it grew and was beautiful. Today under the regime of individualism, the seed of the idea of fellowship is lost under thistles and stones, and storms destroy young plants. Up, to work then! Root up the thistles, away with the stones, he cries, "to give another direction to the waters of human passions, so that instead of harming the growth of the young plants, they will be much more useful and necessary to them. . . . All the blood and tears with which the people have hitherto thought to freshen up the drooping tree of freedom, were in vain because its malady lay deeper than was hitherto suspected. Down to its roots, brothers, let us dig, for there the larva of self-interest lies hidden, there in concealment it eats out the core of the young tree and withers it up. . . . Then forward, brothers! With the curse of Mammon on our lips, let us await the hour of freedom which will change our tears into refreshing dewdrops, the earth into a paradise and mankind into one family."

Series after series of striking contrasts sweeps on, sometimes with rare lyrical charm, sometimes with scorching hatred from years of misery as a toiler. The man is of the nature of prophets. Weitling writes like Lamennais and indeed *Paroles d'un Croyant* he acknowledges as one of his inspirations. Now it is a simple, concrete picture filled with images from the life of a tailor or from agriculture—savoring indeed of some of the Biblical parables; now it is a chant of curses to the rich, to money, to priests. Always it is the language of the people as they speak every day. Often it introduces

into the German, phrases from the French which the writer interprets in a glossary at the end. If is often as pleasing as the French Jasmin's tales in its pictures from the life of the folk.

The second part of the *Guarantieen* moves on an ever higher plane of exaltation until in the end the author has a vision of the coming of the new Messiah to lead workers to the new day and of society reorganized—every one is to work four hours a day. The state is to direct industry. Every man is to have free opportunity to know, and those who know most are to control the administration. There are to be no cobwebs of "universal suffrage" and "sovereignty of the people" for the latter does not exist because of differing interests and the former cannot possibly do more than express certain interests at the expense of others and is not necessarily the chooser of the wisest course. Here Weitling is clearly under the influence of Saint Simon. He has also taken on what Mill found to be the most significant of all the teachings of the Saint Simonians—that all institutions have been the working out of some idea of progress, that they therefore have in them something good, but that they age, new ideas grow and therefore new institutions must be developed to fit the new time. There is only one permanent law—that of progress. We must learn to give up any of our institutions when it is outworn and all personal interests must be moulded into one great common interest. The great underlying principle which is to bring the new society and to hold it together is brotherhood. Let us unify our efforts, he urges, in good Saint Simonian style, and conquer nature. His vision is like that of Lamennais in style and the other French utopians in thought.

However naive his messianic notions may appear, or his dreams of brotherhood, the spirit of inquiry with which he has scrutinized society is of the highest order. Those who say that anything is impossible, he says, are sure to be astounded at new thoughts; but the thinking man is ready for them and not so likely to go astray on them. The whole new order then, depends on knowledge first of all. Man has three kinds of needs: that for acquisition, that for enjoyments, that for knowledge. Of these knowledge is the root of all, for man can enjoy only what he has, and he can have something completely only when he knows where and how he got it.

At the end he puts the challenge straight to the poor themselves to bring this new day to pass. Here he shows the beginnings of

class consciousness. Certain of the rich have understood our needs and turned to communism, he says and lists many a one, Owen, Baboeuf, Cabet and other Frenchmen, and some Germans. But they can do comparatively little after all. "Let each one think therefore what he can do in his place, . . . and what must be done there especially when an uprising of the masses electrifies it. . . . Let each one think how to bring such an uprising. Let each one devote himself to this task . . . as though it all depended on his self-sacrifice. . . . Let him not fear prison or death. . . . So courage my friends! In prisons we are not alone. When morning is gray and the evening grows dusk, when midnight strikes the hour, we are together in spirit and bring an hurrah to our comrades in battle, an hurrah to our martyrs, an hurrah to our faithful dead." He spoke out of his own bitter knowledge of prison as most of the workers who were leaders had an opportunity to do.

The class consciousness is nothing so absolute as that of the leaders who followed him in his group of communists. In his analysis of universal suffrage he made the point that there are many conflicting interests in society. Though he wrote the contrasts between the rich and poor more powerfully than most of the workers, he did not lump each group into a mass when he came to think out his new society, as Marx and Engles did, nor suggest that the dominance of a new class would resolve all conflicts. It was only by an intelligent consideration of the interests of the whole of society that he expected miseries to be removed. To be sure, like Marx and Engels he said that one could not wait for the enlightenment of the masses in order to reorganize society and that one would have to bring the revolution by appealing to their self interest since this was all that ignorant people could understand. He here answered beforehand the fallacy of much liberal argument in America today about giving workers control of industry. It was above all brotherhood that should unite men. Brotherhood in toil, however. Always it is the toiler who is the central figure in his human appeal for the present and his dreams of the future. Government is to be in the hands of those who know, but what are they to know? The whole philosophy of industry. One cannot know unless he has had some direct contact with the thing, he says. The man who directs tailors must therefore have direct knowledge of them.

So Weitling swells the rising class-conscionsness by his call to the

people to bring their own revolution and free themselves; by his central idea of reorganization, by his whole identification of himself with them, and by the strength of his analysis and completeness of expression. He was himself the embodiment of the intelligent workman.

What had come to be accepted as Rousseau's idea of the noble, natural man, happy in a society where his feelings were not corrupted by wicked civilization and where his natural goodness could function in the satisfaction of his wants, had thus by 1848 seeped by way of Saint Simonism and utopian socialism generally, into the ranks of the workmen. In their daily struggles for freedom and in the outburst of 1848 it was tried out. The heat of reality of the masses burnt away its fallacies—the natural instincts of man were obviously not all good. And the road to producing this noble man such as Rousseau had dreamed of producing in *Émile,* was not so simple. Many of the French like Perdiguier still held to it. But a new doctrine had grown up to take its place, that of conflict of interests, and Marx became the dominant figure of the second half century as Rousseau had been of the first.

The growth of class-consciousness in the decades 1830-1848 had produced a workmen's literature ranging from cries of misery, from helpless plaints and burning invective against their oppressors, to happiness in a new religion, thought first by brilliant intellectuals like Saint Simon and Fourier, sung by their own enthusiasts, outlined into new systems by a Weitling. This literature finally preached faith in workmen's own ability when enlightened sufficiently. By 1848 it had reached heights of skill in the field of propaganda.

CHAPTER VII

THE WORKERS' PURELY LITERARY EXPRESSION

The real charm of these proletarian writers lies not in their verse of propaganda but in significant pictures of various trades, glimpses of the life of different individual workmen and flashes of vision of the possible meanings of the new machinery—fragments of delightful lyrical expression of folk-realism. In this the French men of the people surpassed the English except in autobiography.

When Thackeray was in Paris in 1840, he commented on the feeling of the French people for art, and the general happiness among them that was much more marked than in England. He writes in his *Paris Notebook,* "Can there be a more pleasing walk in the whole world than a stroll through the Gallery of the Louvre on a fête-day; not to look so much at the pictures as at the lookers-on? Thousands of the poorer classes are there; mechanics in their Sunday clothes, smiling *grisettes,* smart dapper soldiers of the line . . . The taste of these people will hardly be approved by the connoisseur, but they have *a* taste for art. Can the same be said of our lower classes, who if they are inclined to be sociable and amused in their holidays, have no place of resort but the tap-room or tea-garden, and no food for conversation except such as can be built upon the politics of the police reports of the last Sunday paper? . . . In France such matters are far better managed and the love of art is a thousand times more keen; and how much superiority is there in French society over our own; how much better is social happiness understood; how much more manly equality there is between Frenchman and Frenchman, than between rich and poor in our own country, with all our superior wealth, instruction and political freedom! There is, amongst the humblest, a gaiety, cheerfulness, politeness and sobriety to which in England no class can show a parallel; and these, be it remembered are not only qualities for holidays, but for working-days too, and add to the enjoyment of human life as much as good clothes, good beef or good wages. If to our freedom, we could but add a little of their happiness! . . ."

This French love of art appeared in the many poems, songs, tales written by workmen in their leisure for the joy of the writing.

Most of the men tried at least a few poems in the romantic spirit, for this was the main literary expression of their time. Magu loved to talk about sunsets and write lyrical outbursts to his friends. Ponçy's first volume, *Les Marines,* had in it only one poem on his trade and a second asserting his place as a worker; his *Le Chantier* had only a few more. Both volumes were mostly after the manner of Lamartine. Lapointe's *Le vieux chateau* is the tale of a melancholy evening, with moonlight on ruins, an owl and an old man meditating on the standards of honor, faith and loyalty in the days of beautiful knights and ladies; but revolutions have swept all this away, and the old man falls on the mute tiles and the silence is broken only by bats and owls. The final couplet suggests that Lapointe was also touched by the malady of the century, and perhaps with more justice than some of the bourgeois poets:

> This apparition, weeping and contemplative,
> Of a forgotten epoch, was Poetry.

A typical play of fancy and sentimentality in Festeau's *L'Homme et les deux anges* takes man from his cradle to his grave with the guardian angel always on one side bringing him the comfort of his mother when the Devil's angel of the insatiable heart has troubled him, making lovely dreams when he struggles to earn his living and the bad angel fills him with fear, bringing him love and friends when the bad angel has tempted him to kill himself, and pointing him to hope and eternal life when the Devil tortures his soul before the abyss of death.

Hegesippe Moreau was so entirely romantic that he touched the workmen's spirit only at a few points. Jasmin too belonged in much of his subject matter to the main current of the literature of the thirties for all his folk flavor, his knowledge of the fierce violence of the people when it is roused to anger and moves in a mob, his comprehension of the loneliness and misery of the poor, the self respect of the good workman and his delight in the fête of spinners. For the new current which was bringing the artisan and factory worker into literature and making the actual industry of the people of central interest, we must turn especially to Magu, Ponçy, Dupont, and, to some degree, Lachambeaudie.

In a number of Magu's songs we feel the presence of his trade. He thinks of it always in terms of the shuttle, which comes to seem almost like a person. After his work, he finds at sunset a bit of happy repose outdoors. His thoughts are of liberty, of faith renewed when calm again comes to his troubled heart, of his songs to his love and his shuttle. One poem is called *To My Shuttle,* and the shuttle does actually pass back and forth while the poet meditates: He addresses it tenderly, for it gives him life; he has been tempted away from it, but he returns to it now wholly, for reason has overcome delirium. He has longed for the freedom of nature, but he must renounce that for the sun never gets to his window and he must resign himself to his damp, cold cellar. Yet he has hope and faith in God, and, proud in his independence, he finds gaiety; a little philosophy, friendship, writing verse, make hardships supportable; but quick now, back to work—and the shuttle passes and repasses:

> Run on before me, my shuttle so small,
> Pass, pass rapidly,
> 'Tis you who nourish the poet
> And so he loves you right tenderly.

Ponçy's mood is similar when he thinks of his mason's trowel; it too has brought him to earth from vain dreaming; it sustains the poet. He is sad that it breaks and he must get a new one, but after all there is much new work to be done. He will become devoted to the new one.

A MA TRUELLE CASSEE

> Mon ancienne truelle est veuve
> De sa lame d'acier que je viens de casser.
> Hélas, une truelle neuve
> Doit aujourd'hui la remplacer—
> Sera-t-elle aussi bien trempée?
> J'en doute fort. Elle valait
> La fine lame d'une épée;
> Aucune autre ne l'égalait
> Pour bien polir le plâtre; et quand sur l'étagère
> Je l'agitais, elle était si légère
> Qu-on eût dit qu'elle s'envolait.
>
> Rapide temps, qui jamais ne t'arrêtes,
> J'ai vu ton vol arrondir ses arêtes.
> Ta faim, que rien ne peut rassasier
> N' a pas dédaigné mon acier,

Car tu ronges tous les ouvrages
Comme la mer dévore ses rivages.

J'ai vu des murs solidement construits
Se disloquer, lézardés et détruits
Par ton marteau, dont les coups insensibles
Plus que les notres sont terribles.

Grand déstructeur, merci, grace à toi
Bien des maisons croulent dans la poussière
Et bien souvent ton pied nivelle avec la terre
Les hautes poutres de leur toit.
A l'aspect des débris, l'âme du prolétaire
Semble s'épanouir : c' est du travail qu'il voit.
Le travail, c'est là sa prière,
Le travail fait surgir les chansons de sa voix,
Le travail allège les poids
De son lourd manteau de misère.

Son bonheur est de travailler,
Quand il a terminé sa penible journée,
Il sent son âme fortunée,
Et le repos l'attend sur son humble oreiller.

Toi que je regrette, truelle,
Tu m'a fait savourer ce bonheur méconnu,
Toi seule m'éveillais, comme un ami fidèle
Lorsque, le front pâle, abattu,
Je poursuivais en songe une chimère vaine,
Un mirage trompeur de l'éspérance humaine
Qu'on appelle la gloire et qui, brûlant coursier,
Halétants, épuisés, dans son vol nous entraine.

Quand mes cris appelaient pour le pauvre ouvrier
Une couronne de laurier
Toi seule osait combattre une ardente pensée
Qui brûlait mon âme insensée,
Et l'éclat de ton pur acier
Comme une blanche étoile illumine les ombres
Répandait sa clarté dans mes longs rêves sombres.

Ta pointe avoit tracé bien des vers sur les murs,
Bien des vers, que, peut-être, une plume savante
N'eût pas désavoués. Les corridors obscurs
Ont vu la petite servante
Rêver à ton doux tintement,
Car dans les maisons qu'il fréquente
Parfois le maçon est amant.

Nous avons élevé de chaudes cheminées,
Où l'on cause de toi le soir, lorsque le feu

Brille et que la fumée en diadème bleu,
Plane sur les maisons par elle couronnées.

Nous, avons dans les murs épais
Caché maint écus blancs que malgré sa misère
Toujours le sage prolétaire
Réserve pour les jours mauvais.

Bien des intrigues amoureuses
Ont eu besoin de toi pour se soustraire aux traits
Des vieilles femmes curieuses
Et les gaches que tu scellais
Devenaient, pour l'amour, l'égide du secret.
Maintenant ta tâche est finie,
Tu deviens débris à ton tour.
Oh, ne crains pas, ma vieille amie,
Ne crains pas que Charles t'oublie!

Pourrai-je refuser quelques marques d'amour
Aux riants souvenir semés sur ton passage?
Ne m'accuse donc pas d'infidelité,
Compagne de mon plus bel âge,
Si ton frère rival égalant ta beauté,
Recevait desormais mon culte et mon hommage—
Tu sais que je ne peux vivre d'illusions:
Et bien qu'avec plaisir mon jeune esprit s'arrête
Dans les songes trompeurs d'un brillant horizon,
Le poète, parfois, peut charmer le maçon,
Mais toujours le maçon doit nourrir le poète.[1]

1 "To My Broken Trowel."

"My old trowel is widow—of its blade of steel that I've just broken. Alas! a new trowel must replace it today. Will it be as well tempered? I doubt it strongly. This one was equal to the fine blade of a sword; no other was so good for polishing off the plaster; and when I was brandishing it on the shelf, it was so light, one would have said it flew.

"Swift time, who never pause, I have seen your wing round off the edges. Your hunger that nothing can satisfy has not disdained my steel, for you ravage all works as the sea devours its banks.

"I have seen walls solidly built, give way, cracked and destroyed by your hammer, the insensible blows of which are more terrible than ours.

"Grand destroyer, my thanks, for by your grace, many a house crumbles into dust and often your foot levels with the earth the high beams of their roofs. At the sight of the ruin the heart of the proletarian seems to expand: it is work that he sees. Work, that is his prayer. Work makes the songs of his voice rise. Work lifts the weight of his heavy cloak of misery.

"His happiness is to work. When he has ended his painful day, he feels his soul fortunate, and repose awaits him on his humble pillow. You,

Men had frequently enough made songs to swords, the weapons of heroes. But now Ponçy sees in his trowel steel as finely tempered and loves to think of its perfection for his work and for sustaining his life. Lamartine had sat on the shores of a lake bemoaning the cruel ravages of time and treasuring a memory. Ponçy caught from him the turn of the verse and part of the sadness of time. But his tools make him able to face it differently. As a workman he can turn to the "great destroyer" with some joy, for if walls are crumbled, he will have work, and this means for him sane, strong life.

Sometimes he tells the whole process of a piece of work in his verse, as in his *Chant du maçon* in *Chansons de chaque métier:*

> Noël, amis, du trottoir aux mansardes
> Cette maison est à nous pour six mois.

whom I lament, trowel, you have made me taste this unappreciated happiness. You alone have kept awakening me, like a faithful friend, when, with pale brow and in low spirits, I pursued a vain chimera in my dreams, a deceiving mirage of human hope that is called glory and that like a fiery courser drags us in his flight, panting and worn out.

"When my cries asked a crown of laurel for the poor worker, you alone dared combat the ardent thought which was consuming my mad soul, and the brilliance of your pure steel shed its light in my long sombre dreams as a white star shines through the dark.

"Your point traced many a verse on the wall, many a verse that perhaps a scholarly pen would not have disavowed. Obscure corridors have seen the little servant maid dream over your sweet tinkle, for in the houses that he frequents, sometimes the mason is a lover.

"We have raised warm fire-places where one chats of you in the evening when the fire burns brightly and the smoke in a blue wreath hovers over the houses crowned by it.

"We have concealed in the thick walls many a white silver piece that despite his misery the wise proletarian always reserves for rainy days.

"Many a love affair has had need of you to escape the gossip of curious old women, and the locks you sealed became the shield of the secret of love.

"Now your task is finished, you in your turn become debris. Oh, do not fear, my old friend, do not fear that Charles will forget you.

"Can I refuse some marks of love to the laughing memories scattered along your way? Do not accuse me then of infidelity, comrade of my happiest days, if your rival brother equalling your beauty, receives henceforth my worship and my homage. You know that I cannot live on illusions. And though my young spirit pauses with pleasure on the deceiving dreams of a brilliant horizon, and the poet, sometimes, can charm the mason, yet always the mason must nourish the poet."

Tous ses lambris sillonnés de lézardes
Vont retenir nos marteaux et nos voix.
A l'oeuvre donc, et que nos mains cruelles
Contre ces murs commencent leurs assaults.
Dieu pour construire, a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Frappez plus fort; que le plâtre et la pierre
Roulent des toits au fond des magasins
D'un ouragan de bruit et de poussière
Huit jours durant régalons les voisins,
Puis sur le sol deblayé par les pelles,
Pour bâtir vite, alignons les cordeaux.
Dieu pour construire a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Des murs naguère habités par des ombres
Sont maintenant ouverts au grand soleil,
Et des murs neufs debout sur leurs décombres
Chaque passant admire l'appareil.
Que des planchers les poûtres parallèles
Jettent sur eux leurs bras horizontaux.
Dieu pour construire, a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Narguant chez lui le démon du vertige
Aux toits déjà nous voici parvenus
Comme des fleurs il caresse la tige,
Le vent du ciel, la baise nos fronts nus.
Exhalons nos chansons fraternelles
Comme la brise et comme les oiseaux.
Dieu pour construire a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Courage enfants, clouons sur la charpente,
Les pins du Nord en solive équarris,
Et batissons sur sa rapide pente
La tuile rouge ou l'ardoise aux plans gris.
Que l'escalier remplace les échelles
Et lie entre eux les étages nouveaux.
Dieu pour construire a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Sur les planchers maintenant qu'on dessine
Par des cloisons les logements divers
Les corridors, les salons, la cuisine,
La cheminée où l'on rit des hivers,
L'alcove blanche où, repliant ses ailes
L'amour heureux s'endort sous les rideaux.
Dieu pour construire, a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Et puis, scellons portes, abat-jour, fenêtre:
Car le maçon, du fond de ses chantiers,
Fait du travail monter le thermomètre
Et met en train vingt fraternels métiers.
Dans ces maisons, aux façades si belles,
Il entre aussi du bois et des métaux.
Dieu pour construire, a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.

Frères, ici, notre oeuvre est terminée.
Portons ailleurs nos bras et nos outils,
Et soyons fiers de notre destinée
Qui nous rend chers aux grands comme aux petits.
A notre état restons, restons fidèles,
De lui, pour tous, naissent les grands travaux.
Dieu pour construire, a donné les truelles
Aux mêmes bras qui tiennent les marteaux.[1]

For all the mixed images and the roughness of the verse, the poet's vision is stirring. Sheer zest for life, not some detached reward, but the actual process of making something and making it for human use—it is the deepest meaning of craftsmanship sung by the young mason of Toulon.

Pierre Dupont writes even better poetry on a trade and craftsman. His weaver sings the story of his whole life with the refrain of the passing and repassing of the shuttle. He is thinking of the time when he was a boy out to break the stalks of flax and the process was accompanied now by robbing birds' nests, now by tearing his

1 "Song of the Mason."

"Noel, friends, from the sidewalk to the garrets this house is ours for six months. All its ceilings furrowed with cracks are going to hear our hammers and our voices. To work then, and let our cruel hands commence their assaults on these walls. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"Strike harder, let plaster and stone roll from the roofs into the shops; with a hurricane of noise and dust, eight days long let us regale the neighbors. Then to build quickly, let us line off the space on the ground cleared away by shovels. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"These walls but recently inhabited by shades are now open to the fullness of sunshine, and each passer-by admires the preparation for the new walls to be built up out of their rubbish. Let parallel beams for floors throw out horizontal arms on them. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"Setting at naught the demon of dizziness in us, here we are already arrived at the roof. As it caresses the stems of flowers, the wind of the

breeches; of September when they retted the stalks in the swamp; of the birds on the flax and the differing flowers, the male from which one gets heavy cord, the female which furnishes thread for fine linen. Pictures of winters when the girls span and the boys beat the tow, flash across his mind, then his apprenticeship with a rope-maker until finally he became a weaver. Now a weaver he will remain as long as God pleases. He faces life with the gentle philosophical resignation characteristic of artisans: He works in a dark hole on fine cloth; it ruins his eyes, but spectacles will remedy the matter, and cloth is necessary for ship-sails, shrouds, sheets, babies' clothes. The song ends on the note of dignity that this thought calls forth: It is enough to eat and drink in the world? No, one must have a chest of white linen. He weaves on and on:

> With my two feet beating my loom
> I weave, and my shuttle passes,
> It whirs, passes and repasses
> And I think I hear crying
> A swallow out in space.[1]

sky here kisses our bare brows. We breathe out our songs of brotherliness like the breeze and the birds. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"Courage my children, let us nail on the scaffolding, pines of the north squared at the joints, and let us build on its steep slope the red tile or gray-surfaced slate. The stairway shall replace ladders and bind together the new storeys. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"Now along the floors let partitions design different apartments, corridors, drawing-rooms, kitchen, the fireplace where they will laugh in winter time, the white alcove where folding down his wings, happy love shall sleep behind the curtains. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"And then let us seal up the doorways, skylight and window. For from the depth of his mixing-boxes, the mason makes the thermometer of work go up and sets going twenty brother trades. Into these houses of the beautiful façades, there go also wood and metals. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers.

"Brothers, here, our work is complete. Let us take our arms and our tools elsewhere, and let us be proud of our destiny which makes us dear to the great as to the small. Let us be forever faithful to our estate; from it are born great works for all. For building, God has given trowels to the same arms that hold the hammers."

[1] For the whole song of *Le Tisserand*, see Appendix.

The mill boy works away to the tune of the tic tac, tic tac of his mill and dreams of a mill of his own for his Jeannette who is lovely but pale from sewing,

Pendant que ma mie est à coudre
Et pique son joli doigt blanc
Je regarde ma meule moudre,
Toujours tournant, grondant, roulant.
Mon Dieu! que l'eau du moulin gèle,
Si pendant que je veille au grain
Le coeur de quelque beau voisin
Allait faire tic tac chez elle.[1]

Dupont's *Chanson de la soie* reflects conditions of modern machine industry in silk-weaving in Lyons. The poet sees the present shops as the result of a long historical process. From remote, unknown China came the mulberry tree. The famous spinners of classical lore broke their spindles before the fineness of the thread of a silk-worm. Then finally France grew both tree and worm until now silk is spun at Lyons. It is gloriously beautiful when woven into satin of lovely colors and worn at a dance by a girl! Oh, what a number of looms and bobbins! How the new machines of Vaucanson and Jacquart help, and what a number of threads crossed and recrossed, completing the work of God! But at what a cost too! I have heard a poor girl sigh, "I spin my tomb like the caterpillar." But sing, spinners and weavers, for your turn is coming when every betrothed bride shall dress in white satin. This poem is not so simple as *Le Tisserand*. It is an attempt of the newly educated man of the people to relate industry with liberal culture. It is overweighted with classical allusions and somewhat fantastic expression of origins. But the last stanzas have the unfailing tone of delight in the process of the work and its use, and a sigh of sadness over the cost in human life.

One other song suggests the presence of the factory, this time as a background. *Le Repos du soir* opens in the country with a pic-

[1] **While my love is sewing away**
And pricks her pretty white finger,
I watch my mill as it's grinding
Forever turning and rumbling and rolling.
My Lord! may the mill race freeze
If while I am watching the grain,
The heart of some fine young neighbor
Has been making a tic tac beside her.

ture of sunset and the plough left in the furrow, of shepherds counting sheep, of smoke from chimneys of cottages as the workers get home. Its tone is that of Burn's *Cotter's Saturday Night*—pathos, peace of family repose after toil and the sense of the infinite. But then follows the picture of the home-coming of the factory worker:

Les ouvriers, si las, quand vient la nuit,
Peuvent partir, enfin la cloche sonne;
Ils vont gagner leur modeste réduit,
Où, sur le feu la marmite bouillonne.

La ménagère et les enfants sont là,
Du chef de l'âtre attendant la présence,
Dès qu'il parait, un grand cri: "Le voilà!"
S'élève au ciel, comme en rejouissance;
De bons baisers, la soupe, un doigt de vin,
Rendent la joie à sa figure blême;
Il peut dormir, ses enfants ont du pain,
Et n'a-t-il pas une femme qui l'aime!

* * * * * *

Tous les foyers s'éteignent lentement,
Dans le lointain une usine qui fume
Pousse de terre un sourd mugissement,
Les lourds marteaux expirent sur l'enclume;
Ah! détournons nos âmes du vain bruit
Et nos regards du faux éclat des villes;
Endormons-nous sous l'aile de la nuit,
Qui mène en rond ses étoiles tranquilles![1]

Though the longing at the end is for the peace of the stars, it is for rest at the end of one day. When Dupont bids us turn from the false brilliance of cities, it is the hard materialism and selfishness, the loss of comprehension of real values that he has in mind and

[1] "The workers, so tired when night time comes, can leave, for at last the bell rings. They make their way home to their modest retreat where the kettle is boiling over the fire. The housewife and children are awaiting there for the presence of the chief of the hearth. The moment he appears, a great cry, 'He's here!' is raised to the sky in gladness of heart. Good kisses, some soup, a finger of wine bring back joy to his pale face. He can sleep, for his children have bread, and has he not a wife who loves him?

"Slowly the fires are put out, in the distance a factory which smokes, shakes the earth with low rumbling, the heavy hammers lie still on the forge. Ah, let us turn our souls away from the vain noise and our eyes from the false brilliance of cities; let us go to sleep beneath the wings of the night as it takes its tranquil stars in its course."

not a permanent escape from machine industry as such or from the life of work. Fundamentally he is a modernist, proud of the developing industry of France, certain that it will ultimately bring benefits to the workers and to the whole world, that frontiers will be broken, that there will be no more wars. The Jacquart loom has already lightened the toil of the silk-wearers and given them work in large shops pleasanter than their own dark rooms. What may railroads not do too, cutting through rocks, conquering distance and obstacles, and with masses of people in their cars, speeding as though on the wings of a bird. He even glimpses the time when science will go farther. Gaily he walks along with a cartman and sings:

Au roulier il tient compagnie
Riant du scepticisme amer
De ce vieux mécreant qui nie
Le succes du chemin de fer.
Il lui répond: mais que sera-ce
Quand les ballons vont se frayer
Un nouveau chemin dans l'éspace
Emportant charrette et roulier?[1]

Besides, what glorious things machines are themselves! *Le Chauffeur de Locomotive* in spite of its elaborate imagery which persistently parallels the engine with a horse and then suddenly changes to "black arms" making speed, has significance for its mood of wild joy in the shine of the engine, in the swift rolling motion and even in its roar. The poet feels the intoxication of speed and then the beauty of that far reach of the human mind when it finds the wonder of the commonplace: How long man saw kettles boil without thinking of the uses of steam! How small is our outlook! Even now innkeepers and carters see only the immediate danger of losing their bread. But have patience. With steam the earth will be freed, it will become more fruitful, it will be enriched and everywhere there will come ease for the people and we shall forget all the evil of the past.

Come, he cries to all the nations in *Appel de la France aux Nations à l' Occasion de l'exposition universelle* in 1855, industry is to take

[1] "Laughing at the bitter scepticism of this old miscreant who denies the success of the railroad, he answers him: But what will it be like when balloons go cutting themselves a new way in space and carry off cart and cartman?"

the place of war, let there be a great concord of nations; first England, the mistress of the sea, with her workers who turn iron into gold; then let Germany, great for her science and philosophy, now complete her greatness by taking part in this new industrial activity; let Italy, Spain, Hungary and Poland open their eyes to the glories of modernity and send warriors to industry, for it has a task for all, and lacks workers; let India and Africa, rich with natural products, add industry to the development of the great new age. Steam is the enchanting fairy, it is the soul of the new world. After steam with its railroads and factories will come electricity. Science will develop agriculture; machines will lessen the need of manual labor and demand the service of intelligence. We shall have abundance; ahead lies indefinite progress wherein happiness is to be sought in equilibrium and harmony. In the new dawn each shall have a share of the goods; work will be ennobled; invention will develop more and more. Arts will flourish, glory will come to the scholar; human beings will live in closer relationships and we shall have the unity of the world.

Ennoblissons le travail qui féconde
Le sol aride, et fait dans l'atelier
De la matière éclore un nouveau monde
Par les sueurs et l'art de l'ouvrier.

Amis chantons la science inventive
Qui d'heure en heure active le progrès
Et dit: Je veux que tout le monde vive,
De la nature éventant les secrets.

Amis chantons la moderne alchimie
Qui change en or le sable et le rocher
Et des humains fait une race amis,
Les condamnant tous à se rapprocher.[1]

This is the dominant note in workers' verse though Ponçy's peddler realizes that steam is destroying his trade, and his silk weaver even

[1] "Let us ennoble the toil which makes the arid earth fruitful and in the shop makes a new world open out from matter by the sweat and the art of the workman.

"Friends let us sing of inventive science which from hour to hour forwards progress and says: I want everybody to be active in discovering the secrets of nature.

"Friends, let us sing to the modern alchemy which changes sand and rock into gold, and makes of human beings a race of friends, condemning them all to draw near to each other."

while saying that the Jacquart loom is the word of order for the march toward progress, does suggest that the more industry progresses, the more the workers are exploited.

"I have been to the Exposition twice," writes Flaubert, the best prose writer of his time. "It is crushing. There are splendid and extraordinarily curious things there. One feels himself very far from Paris, in a world new and ugly; a monstrous world which is perhaps that of the future."[1] That was in general the reaction of the artists of the main current toward industry. The outbreak of the war of 1870, the cataclysm of 1914, the ugliness of regions of the north of England or the heart of Pennsylvania, the long-enduring slavery of the workers would all lead a modern artist to think that perhaps the Flauberts were more nearly right than the dreamers of the working class.

Yet the vision of their poet does release the imagination because of its unfailing insistence on human values. When Dupont says:

> La mecanique a tout dompté
> La chimie a droit à nos stances,
> Poètes de la liberté,[2]

we know that he has in mind human freedom, and we answer to him with the feeling that here is a great, almost untouched field of beauty which the poets could reveal to us if they but knew. Perhaps only the proletariat can know, and it may be that it is only to them that we can look for this particular gift. The big enterprisers may understand the vast adventure of conquering nature and organizing enormous units of power. But it is the workers themselves who most fully feel the human values at stake in the process. Michelet[3] commented on the difficulty here that the poetry lies less in a few, picturesque details than in the great harmonies which are too complicated to be easily grasped. He believed that the workers could understand and that they could sing them for us if they did not lose sight of their real gifts and try to become part of the middle class.

Meanwhile in those beginnings of the forties, what a tang there is in the pictures of workmen toiling at their trades, dreaming, lov-

[1] Flaubert, Gustave, *Correspondance*, edit., Conard, vol. III, pp. 478-9; Letter to George Sand.

[2] "Mechanics have conquered everything, and chemistry has a right to our verse, poets of liberty."

[3] Michelet, Jules, *Le Peuple*. Part II, chap. II, p. 145.

ing, sometimes in cities, sometimes in small towns. Pierre Dupont's girl of the cabaret with her fichu, her blouse of rusty cloth, her striped skirt and round cap, spins and sweeps and flirts with pleasant familiarity to a point, but rewards anything beyond that with a ringing box on the ear, for she is quite different from her coarse and too experienced mother. A wood-cutter at work in the forest cuts his foot and, with his pride hurt because he must be carried home, he cries out to his axe that it shall pay for betraying him like this; the other wood-cutter sings as he brings down a five hundred year old oak. A farm-girl is counting eggs, milking, feeding fowls, harvesting through wearying long days until her song is all gone, dreaming of the days of the vintage when perhaps she will find a husband. One is reminded of Wordsworth by the gentle, calm tone, or of Rousseau's idyll. But it is the realism of a poet of the people here, and though the subjects are still those of the village rather than of the modern industrial society, the quality is something new.

Besides there are city firemen heroically facing dangers as great as war; best of all there is the gay Parisian worker, Jean Trémaleu, who has come from Brittany:

> La misère fut son école
> Et le travail son protecteur;
> Aujourd'hui son air bénévole
> Vous dit: J'ai vaincu le malheur.[1]

At night as Les Halles, he unloads barrels of fruit, during the day he works at the port; he can lift a sack of grain or a barrel without feeling it. He has risked his life for others at times and says nothing of it. At night he has taken time to learn to read a bit and he recites Molière at Les Halles. He is proud and not to be seduced by the lure of gold; he takes what he earns with his back and his arms. He is going to marry; they say he has chosen the "pick of the basket" and that there will be a great fête. May he marry and have children like him:

> Jean Trémaleu, bon drille
> Possède un gros bon sens;
> Par son esprit il brille
> Dans le quartier des Innocents.[2]

[1] "Misery was his school and toil his patron; today his benevolent air says to you: I have indeed conquered bad fortune."

[2] "Jean Trémaleu, jolly chap, possesses great good sense, and by his wit he shines in the quarter of the Innocents."

But Dupont's workers are not always so ideal. Once apparently the singer ran into a barber who would make one forget the possibility of a Figaro. He was dirty and drunk; he had a horrid hole of a shop in which the visitor finally had to shave himself to the tune of the laughter of the barber's equally drunk companions.

Back of these barbers, cartmen, bakers and weavers of their own time, these writers felt the poetry of centuries of toil. When Depont saw the vast shops at Lyons with the new looms, he thought of remote origins of the silk industry. Lachambeaudie loved to take an historical sweep of the growth of communities and the development of steam. Perhaps of all of them Charles Ponçy most nearly succeeded in giving a sense of life unified through passing generations of men toiling, and significant through this toil though often under present conditions, it was hard, cruel and brutalizing.

In the days of the old Romans the cult of Bacchus brought joy to the people, and it lives on through the makers of wine-casks. In the past sorcerers frightened the people with all sorts of strange superstitions, but the printing press has shed light among the masses and freed them—the printer is great for his oneness with this vast movement. Pages of history pass as the barber thinks of the gorgeous coiffeurs he made for court ladies in the old days or of Figaro adventuring in the life of feudal lords, and contrasts his present prosaic days when he shaves only rustics; but still political chatter in his chair decides the fate of nations no less than before—the rhythms of revolutions are here. The foundry workers' bells ring out love or mourning for the people, or anger or madness. There is the trade of the world in the product of silk-weavers, and local bargaining as the peddler goes his way. Back of the windows which the scissors-grinder passes are the life of families and tailor's skill dependent on his care in sharpening shears. His own life is a struggle for black bread for his children, but though their appetites are a strain, being a father gives meaning to his days. Gay Sundays at cafés, the mingling of many people; swift journeys with the coachman along roads now safe from highwaymen; solemn or gay human fête-days celebrated with the help of the pastry-cook; liberty of the open road for peddlers; hot work before oven fires for bakers; the rag-picker feeling the flow of experience in the changes of his fragments of material from one form to another—on

and on life moves, and this poet-mason's imagination plays over it with half wistful delight.

It was a great thing that he tried to do. It was the spirit which made Whitman write his *Song of Occupations*. Ponçy came near success. If he could have been a little less a romantic and if he could have attained more polished form, he might have been the great poet of the people whom George Sand hoped him to be. Even as it is, his volume is fresh and suggestive. It is a foreshadowing of the sweep of industry which the contemporary worker, Pierre Hamp has given in his nine volumes of *Le Peine des hommes*. Between them have gone the growth of workmen's independence and, in literature, realism through Zola and the Russians.

In general spirit these early poets range from profound sadness and occasionally indignation to the sunny joy of the south; from revolt against wrongs to resignation, from longing for complete escape into some poetical world to gentle hope or lively delight in industry, from sentimentality to the saltiest realism and humor, from heavy moralizing to the lilt of the song for the joy of the singing.

The climate of the south probably helps to account for the prevailing mood of the southern workers. Ponçy's silk-weaver claims the workers' inextinguishable right to happiness, and Ponçy himself found a good deal of it in the reddish smoke he saw over the city as he worked high up on his scaffolding, in the girl at the window, the cat prowling over roofs and out there—the blue, sunlit sea. "How happy we are to be workers!" he cries to the masons in delight at the thought of hanging high like a bird while he works:

> Que nous sommes heureux d'être ouvriers! La vie
> A pour nous des douceurs que plus d'un prince envie
> Le matin sur les toits avec les gais oiseaux
> Nous chantons le soleil qui sort du sein des eaux,
> Qui submergeant ces toits d'une mer de lumière,
> Change en corniche d'or leurs corniches de pierre
> Et semble réchauffer de ses rayons bénis
> La tuile, frêle égide où s'abritent les nids—
> Nous guettons les beautés dont l'âme et la fenêtre
> Semblent s'épanouir au jour qui vient de naître.
> Et de l'aube à la nuit, l'aile de nos refrains
> Emporte, dans son vol, nos maux et nos chagrins.[1]

[1] "How happy we are to be workers! Life has sweetness for us that more than one prince envies. In the morning over the roofs with gay birds, we sing to the sun which is rising from the bosom of the waters,

Though steam bids fair to destroy the trade of the carter, Ponçy hears him along the road singing of his gay times with hostesses at inns, and his chorus recurs with its jaunty lilt:

Eh youp, mes pauvres bêtes,
Le charbon
Brûle en vain nos charrettes;
Eh youp, mes pauvres bêtes
Le roulier tiendra bon.[1]

The rope-maker cheers the ennui of his heavy toil by singing, as the sunshine pours into his shop. The country innkeeper's song of Sunday radiates joy of happy workers gathered there free of care, singing, chatting, playing. Jasmin describes a wedding of the people in this south against a background of beauty:

In the time when the apple, the prune and the almond trees
Were whitening all the country,
Here is the song that one heard.
* * * * * *
The sky was all blue,
One saw not a cloud,
Fine sunshine of March was pouring
And into the air a little fresh wind was flinging
Its puffs of perfume.

It was for such scenes as this that the pathetic Moreau longed as he lay wretched on a hospital bed in Paris, unable to make his way in a world of ugly toil, unable to win the world with his verse, now worn out, cursing life and longing for death. He thought of the lovely stream where he played as a child:

Je veux faire à tes bords un saint pélerinage,
Revoir tous les buissons si chers à mon jeune âge,

which drowns these roofs in a sea of light, changes their cornices of stone into a cornice of gold and with its blessed rays seems to warm the tile, frail shield where nests are sheltered. We glimpse the beauties with which the soul as well as the window seems to open in the light of this day which is just born. And from dawn to night, the wings of our choruses carry our sorrows and troubles away in their flight."

[1] "Eh youp, my poor old beasts,
Coal
Burns up our carts in vain.
Eh youp, my poor old beasts,
The carter still will gain."

Dormir encore au bruit de tes roseaux chanteurs,
Et causer d'avenir avec tes flots menteurs.[1]

He had had times, however, when his sadness was not so bitter and he had hope. In *L'Abeille* his wistfulness is followed by lightness of heart, for he is like a bee and God has told him to fly always far from the great and their lackeys, and to murmur always in attic rooms or cottages.

But geography was not all, for Reboul of Nîmes was from his boyhood sad because of the illness and death of people near him, and later he was solemn and tragic. And for all the tragedy of the north and the undercurrent of sadness that he knows well in the life of the workers, Dupont's robust genius is gay. His Jean Trémaleu is not to be downed by ill fortune. From the north too came Magu's wry humor and a touch of pathetic drollery in *A Dream.* In the damp misery of his cellar-workroom, he dreamed of a tiny house with a garden fragrant with roses and jasmine, and instead of being cluttered with fountains and statues which might frighten him, planted with onions and lettuce. But his wife's incorrigible sense of real situations woke him by her cry, "My man has lost his wits." Again and again flashes of humor lighten the pages of these poets.

However much they might be gay or might insist on the joy of certain aspects of the workers' lives, they all had a way of cutting through romantic follies of some enthusiasts of the middle class. Ponçy showed the life of a shepherd with all its hard work, exposure to the weather and loneliness, and then remarked, "Yet city people think this life is the Age of Gold!" Reboul had no use for picturesque ruins and dirt, and he counselled the mayor of old Nîmes to install proper sewers, clean the streets and improve certain horrible old quarters of the city:

Il est des carrefours au coeur de la cité
Qui jamais du soleil n'ont connu la clarté.
Des lépreuses maisons les façades ventrues
Ménacent les passants engagés dans ces rues.
Là, le haillon empreint de l'oubli du moutard
Décore la fenêtre et pend en étendard.

[1] "I long to make a holy pilgrimage to your shores,
to see all your thickets so dear to my youth,
to sleep again to the noise of your singing reeds,
and chat of the future with your lying waters."

La nuit y peint le sol d'arabesques étranges;
De tant de poésie Hugo serait aux anges!
Moi j'aimerais mieux voir la sape du maçon
Dans le pâte moisi de ces vieilles masures,
Pratiquer sans pitié de larges ouvertures.
Horreur du locataire et mine des souris,
Le vieux Nimes ne peut se sauver qu'à ce prix.[1]

Perdiguier, when he first saw the Durance River on his way to Marseilles and learned how this tiny stream could become a raging gray, yellow or red torrent, commented on the unnatural picture of it which poets had given in "langorous verse" celebrating the "enchanting banks of the Durance." "But," he says, "let us be just; this river is the source of a multitude of tiny canals which carry moisture on all sides, and abundance and fruitfulness, which transform stony, dry places into productive land, into grassy pastures and fragrant gardens. . . . Yes, let us speak all that is true about the river . . . but let us not make a dove of an eagle."[2]

Perdiguier here says what might be taken as the keynote of workers' contribution to literature. Ability to feel the poetry in actual processes contributing to life where others would perhaps see only the crudeness of the material, unwillingness to toy with the picturesque which really concealed suffering—it was a great gift.

It has to be admitted that this grasp of real things was all shot through with sentimentality which often makes their verse and their stories unreadable. Ponçy spoils a good story of a criminal who had been twenty years at the galleys and had been purified in spirit through one trial after another, by dragging out the scene of his death in the poor ward at the hospital and making his old mother appear so that the tale ends with long drawn out tears. Too often his soul soars through the "vaults of heaven, a pure white sister of the birds." Even Dupont has this tendency. When the wood-cutter

[1] "There are squares in the heart of the city which have never known the light of the sun. Leprous houses with big-bellied façades threaten passers-by who are busy in these streets. There the stained rags of a little brat decorate the window and hang like a banner. Night paints the earth there with strange arabesques; with so much poetry Hugo would be in the seventh heaven! For my part, I should rather see the undermining of a mason pitilessly making large holes in the mouldy paste of these old ruins. Horror of the tenant and source of mice, Old Nimes cannot be saved except at this price."

[2] Perdiguier, Agricol, *Mémoires*, vol. I ,p. 108.

fells a tree, the poet laments the loss of the old oak which has so long been a shelter for birds' nests. Though his *La Fille du peuple* does give a full and powerful picture of the girl's struggles and dangers in a big city, and though it is poignant with the poet's questioning about her origin and his gentleness toward her, it ends with imagery of chains broken at her feet, queenly crowns of roses and myrtle, her hard lot as of a bird without a nest, flowers without roots.

The whole group tended to run into similar extravagance when they wrote of their religious faith or of the future exploitation of the treasures of the earth for the good of the many. In these cases it is due to their awkwardness in the use of language and their succumbing to the all too great temptation to over-elaborate metaphors. George Sand again and again warned Ponçy of this danger and urged him to cultivate his artistic taste. When she was suggesting to him his *Chansons de chaque métier,* she wrote, "But in order to bend his rather too select and brilliant talent to the austere simplicity indispensable for that kind of poetry, he will have to study much, to give up many glittering effects and many coquettish expressions of which he is too fond. Will he equal to so great a reformation? Yet without such, the work of which I speak would be devoid of value, of attraction for the vulgar, and ought I to say so? of novelty in the eyes of connoisseurs."[1]

Here is the issue always facing writers of the proletariat. When they write what they see, they often evidence unusual pictorial ability. Ponçy attains a kind of power in writing of the red ship-lights weirdly dancing on the water at night at Toulon as if devils were playing, or of his work:

> Although fingers bleed and feet freeze . . . .
> I bless my tools and obscure destiny, happy to have so much sun every day.

or of his baker who "makes a fire on pine cones. It bronzes his naked breast and sweat pours down." At times they convey exquisite nuances. Lapointe suggesting the hopelessness of the people's cry says it is carried away by the wind "like a noise in the desert." Dupont writing of the worker's home-coming gives in a few swift strokes not only the picture of the pale man and his tiny home, but the overtones both of his factory and personal life, and

[1] Sand, George, *Correspondance,* vol. I, 12 Septembre 1844.

then carries us out to the background of the universal where the stars wheel.

But too often most of these men fall into the error of trying to be literary in some academic sense that means the death of art. They read the masterpieces of their time or of a great classical period. They discover words, new, beautiful sounding ones. They love to use them in large numbers. The trick of style seems to lie there. They are not aware of the overtones or even of the concrete content of them. So elaboration results. It is in the most recent diary of a workman as much as in some of the early ones. If they are like Thomas Cooper, they go through a period of being unable to write at all, overwhelmed by the perfections of a Milton or a Shakespeare, and only some mood of lyricism such as that caused by falling in love will encourage them to write again. Then they try to express their feelings as the masters do. It takes a robust genius like Whitman to throw aside all the old forms and follow an open road, to hew out a new form suited to the new material of his time. There was no such genius among the workingmen of the early century, though it is true that Jasmin and Dupont did listen to the people and make their own form to a certain extent.

For the most part the imitative attempts of the men of France took them into two weaknesses. First of all they tried to use rhymed alexandrines, which are infinitely complex and difficult to master, which had been developed in a time when the study of the classics and the Bible had come freshly to men, and which most successfully expressed the heroic emotions of the classical drama. The workmen wanted an heroic measure, rightly, and a few lines in this form were successful, an occasional picture by Lapointe, more often an outburst of Reboul's, for he had more of the old classicist in his spirit. But mostly their lines fell into prose, plodding heavily with generalities, commonplaces, sentimental showers of tears, somewhat farfetched Biblical imagery and even the paraphernalia of classical gods, all of it as far removed from the way the modern man was thinking as the system of civilization which admitted the capacity for heroic emotions only in those born in noble families.

The Charybdis of this Scylla was the romanticism of the thirties, which newly educated workmen were the more likely to imitate because it was of their time, and many of them were encouraged and helped by the leaders of the movement—Chateaubriand, Lamartine,

Sand, Hugo. The influence of this appeared even more in the form than in the general subject matter—extravagances, idealization, floods of images not particularly related to the subject but accumulating emotion, were all too likely to spoil even a poem about a trade or a fable that might otherwise have a sharp edge.

The workers had rich new material to express. Lachambeaudie suggested the possibilities and heralded the end of the mood of romanticism when his poem of the locomotive bade poets leave their symbols and gilded lies of myths and hyperboles, their elegies and their irresponsible orgies, and celebrate creative toil. He ends:

> O nouvel Amphion! qu'à ta voix enchantée
> Naissent des monuments utiles, glorieux.
> Poète, à la douleur que ton luth fasse trêve;
> La vérité bientôt remplacera la rêve,
> Et la réalité sera le merveilleux.[1]

But his lines do the very thing in style that he bade the poets stop doing. In the whole poem the imagery is the most astonishing mixture of the mechanical and the sentimental when he describes an engine; he is heavy with the classics. Yet he has swing and enthusiasm. Man lifts his head, glorious in the control of nature. Lachambeaudie does not altogether fail of his effect nor does Ponçy. Their success is often in their vigor, as in the strong dialogue of Ponçy's foundry-men or his pilot battling with a wild ocean. Magu often attains the very flavor of the people—his language is in their idiom and his verse usually marches on in eight or nine syllabled lines, unaccented, in short rhythm that has the actual sound of a workman talking. Dupont more steadily attains this and also with more variety, though often a writer like Baudelaire comments on his carelessness in style.

On the whole in this first movement of theirs they succeeded best in the song, in autobiography and legends. Almost always their legends were fine, for they had a sense of the dramatic and ability to turn the story quickly and significantly. The material was much of it old, and it was their own. They seemed to have less feeling that they were being "literary" when they used it. They were less likely to imitate other writers. Not only Jasmin, but Magu and

[1] "Oh new Amphion! At the sound of your enchanted voice, let useful, glorious monuments have birth. Poet, let your lute make a truce with sorrow; truth will soon replace dreams, and reality will be the marvellous."

even Roly, the less distinguished carpenter, were really interesting in this field.

But the moment they started to write other stories, their plots became stilted, their characters merely representative, the ones of all good, the others of all bad, the conversations wooden and usually pointing a moral. Mawkish sentiment served for the love story or else unreal platonic purity so simple that along with the passion all human light and shade disappeared. This failure is the more noteworthy because often in their lives these men worked out a code neither sentimental nor foolishly insistent on bourgeois notions of purity to the exclusion of other values. Their literary denial of what they knew in their lives suggests again the fatality of escape from their own sources. Even today workers do not succeed in writing convincing love stories. Wherever Pierre Hamp weaves one into his tale of industry, it becomes a physical affair with the most stupid blushes and trite conversation between the lovers, and yet somehow the author seems to mean it to be modest and subtlely symbolic. *The Moon Harvest* of the New York barber, Cautela, alight with the beauty of Italy, full of song and energy as long as it keeps to folk scenes of Italian hill towns, or the rush of New York, is a novel of the eternal triangle as it has been done to death long since. No new directness of attack or of code relieves the platitudes or makes up for the lack of any analysis of complexity that compares in subtlety or profundity with any good novel by an intellectual. The writers of the first half of the nineteenth century failed equally. Gilland with his *La Rose blanche* or almanach writers sentimentalizing over violets and lovers' deaths, or Lapointe with his *Daniel le Vagabond* are equally dull and unreadable. Lapointe succeeded in his novelette only in scenes of workmen singing at cafés, in his characterization of old Catherine, the shrewd, sympathetic and long tried wife of a workman, and at times in the pathos of Daniel's life as a vagabond.

But in song they did really succeed in expressing much of the new spirit. Like the legend it comes more spontaneously from the heart of the people, and it might be expected soonest of all forms to take on the tone of their new life except where all but animal existence was crushed out. In England the songs were almost always like Methodist hymns in rhythm and phrase, and indeed in purpose. In France the tone was more varied. Perdiguier outlined the workers'

need of them, though he himself did not succeed in making good ones. Béranger had given them their literary form. He had already introduced the every day language of the people and expressed depths of their life rather than the drinking and light love of women which had previously been the content of French songs. The workmen themselves often followed him, even Magu sometimes and Ponçy mostly, though he added new material and showed considerable skill of his own in the use of varied forms to suit it. In his *Foundry Worker* where the men are together in a shop, the dialogue between two individuals carrying the story and the refrain sung by a chorus suggest the whole group at work. Refrains often accompany the gestures of work as in the cartman's cry to his beasts and the ran, pan, pan of the cobbler. The metre is suited to different trades, the skilled and dignified printers and watchmakers singing in long, dignified lines and the irresponsibility of the cartman lilting along in gay, short verse.

Some of these writers were original enough to compose not only their own words but also the music. Vinçard did it with some success. Dupont really accomplished, for words and music came together with him so that either loses significance without the other. The cocky certainty of the new proletarian thinking himself a Napoleon and marching gaily through the country on his tour of France is not half felt until one sings the equally cocky music asserting itself, repeating a third higher and landing on a high F of certainty. The tune of the weaver's song beats with the loom and the song of bread is an insistent cry on one note when the people repeats over and over, "I am hungry." The minor tone of the *Chant des ouvriers* is in the melody; the key and rhythm of *Repos du soir* carry the gentleness and the longer lines of the text. The wheels of the locomotive go rushing along on a single note in swift sixteenths, and one feels the triumph of motion in glad high notes. The poet has felt the words and the music together so completely that the songs become the despair of a translator. Sly turns, sighs, flights of spirit into space—the play of notes suggests an infinite variety completing the effect of the eight and nine syllabled lines with their alternating rhyme often touched with wit. One can easily imagine the dramatic power of them when Dupont himself sang and touched them off with his gestures.

Success in the song was due to the fact that here the workmen

knew how to be simple. The same factor helps to account for their success in autobiography. Both the English and the French wrote volumes which are as fresh today as ever and which are rich in dramatic scenes, sketches of people, of industrial conditions, of political struggles and the inner drama of the working man—Bamford's *Passages from the Life of a Radical* in England, Cooper's *Life Written by Himself,* Lovett's *Life and Struggles in Pursuit of Bread, knowledge and Freedom;* in France Perdiguier's *Mémoires,* Jasmin's *Mous Soubenirs,* Pierre Vinçard's *Mémoires épisodiques d'un vieux chansonnier Saint Simonien,* the anonymous *Confessions d'un ouvrier* edited by Souvestre, even Gilland's outline for Sand and his story of *Petit Guillaume.* Here the attempt to be elaborately literary seems rarely to have led them astray. Except in the case of Jasmin and in a shorter effort by Magu, they wrote in simple prose. The material they had known and felt deeply, and the problem of individualization was already solved for them. There was no temptation to make typical characters, and there was little sentimentality. Even when he was in a mood of romantic melancholy, Perdiguier wrote with freshness and sense about mountain walks. Usually the interest dies down toward the end where most of the dramatic struggles are over, but in this, workers' autobiography seems only to be like others. On the whole it is here that they give us a wealth of material which we can get nowhere else. Here we see the drama of organization and the conflict between organizers, the enthusiasm and richness of life coming from activity in a movement, the high meaning of the use of the hands and tools. It is perhaps in this field that the most fruitful literary effort of workmen is to be expected.

CONCLUSION

The actual literary accomplishment of the workers up to 1850 in Europe may seem slight from one point of view. But it is important as a beginning. Again and again through earlier centuries the common people had revolted, and all through history they had expressed themselves somehow in cathedrals, ballads, songs and tales of heroes. They had a new misery to fight and a new expression of beauty to find when the Industrial Revolution at once huddled together masses of a new sort of population into the horrors of factory cities and opened up vistas of freedom and beauty never dreamed before. The rise of political democracy with its declaration of the rights of man and the accompanying freedom of expression gave them opportunity. Intellectuals, cutting down to the causes of misery, and fired with visions of a fresh and happier world, inspired and helped direct the people's search. Production and amelioration of the lot of the poor, a new religion of work and brotherhood, a controlled and directed society, these were the ideals of the new order. Carlyle believed that only by such a gospel could England be saved from dilettantes and the worshippers of Mammon, and he was a potent influence in turning the current of English literature to the large social interest of Dickens, the humanity of George Eliot, and Ruskin's theory that only if society were beautiful, could there be beautiful art. The French saw in the new religion the consummation of the Great Revolution. For a generation literature was dedicated to the purposes of a new revolution and attained heights in *Histoire des Girondins* and *Les Misérables*. The failure of the revolution silenced the voices of the prophets, but the new realistic novel increasingly drew its material from the people.

Perhaps even more significant for the far future was the new revelation of the personality of the workingman. Here were some few carpenters, shoemakers, mechanics and weavers, who had come upon books and debates in the press or at political gatherings where vast new movements were afoot, and who by their own activity of mind had managed to supplement a paltry three winters at school or the narrowness of priestly teaching with the best that the centuries had thought. Cooper with Milton, Latin writers and history, Perdiguier

with his Voltaire and Bossuet's *Histoire Universelle,* Magu with LaFontaine, Gilland with Rousseau, all of them had managed to find their way to a large world beyond their own narrow horizon. Their imaginations were released. They saw their work in relation to the whole of humanity. They learned to speak of its glory or of the contrasts between their destiny as toilers and that of the people making profits at their expense.

The fact that they realized themselves as a part of articulate humanity was one of those subtle and unmeasurable influences that produce revolutions. It was one of the first factors to break the workman's stultifying sense of inferiority. Only the other day an American factory worker, discouraged with the many failures of labor organizations and with the circle of materialism in which they seem to be whirling, learned what these earlier workers had written. The effect was electric. "I had no idea we had done so much. This renews my faith. We have something larger to fight for." It was realization that workers might organize for the development of some rich inner being that dawned on him as it dawned on those writers of the early nineteenth century. It is written large in their literature, this pride of being able to speak.

Certainly they faltered as yet. As individuals, courageous and active as they were, they were chained by limitation of sheer physical energy. Most of them worked from eleven to thirteen hours a day and for a wage which provided the merest existence. The wonder is that they spoke at all. But more than that, one cannot expect fully realized genius all at once expressing a class which is still for the most part enslaved. A new cultural group has to build on an old tradition of workmanship and out of that and the new conditions of society which it is moulding, it has to find its own material and its own artistic technique—a process involving a vast number of stages and usually generations in time. At a period when no proletarian culture had been evolved, much of the content and form of workmen's writing came inevitably from the intellectuals of their time. Much of their own was dross. There were too great faith in the man with a good heart, too much sentimental piety, too simple a view of history, and certainly awkwardness of form.

Yet even so, a significant contribution of their own remains: First of all a statement of the issue between slavery and life; an assertion of humanity—of workmen's capacity to suffer, to aspire,

to love beauty—an assertion in itself of great import when society considered them only as bits of machinery. Secondly the high imaginative appeal of processes of production—contacts with materials of earth and moulding them into new forms essential for existence, shelter and widened intercourse; forces patterning men's associations with each other; the solid foundation for the far vision of the mind.

But before literature fully expressive of these ideas and the implications of them could appear, society had to be changed. Not until all workers could have free access to knowledge and the traditions of culture, not until they could have the right of free men to direct their own lives could they have a perfected art of their own. These early writers saw that the wealth of their study and the power of their expression must be devoted to movements to free their class. The bulk of their literary effort was inevitably propaganda, either invective or, like all youthful attempts, glorious pictures of the infinite, propaganda not very clear in marking the limits of the working-class but important because it contains the beginnings of contemporary class-consciousness and points the way to a definition of the right to life. The few purely literary expressions, revealing either the personal life of the workman or the poignant beauty in production for satisfaction of human wants and in organization of the workmen, foreshadowed new epics.

The failure of Chartism and of the French Revolution of 1848 silenced this early generation. Workers' education and strengthened belief in association have remained. Otherwise the memory of them has faded because the workers were not sufficiently self-conscious as a group to keep alive their literary tradition. Moreover, these beginners have been too easily scorned as utopian. It is all very well that later generations should have outlined an effective method for attaining power, but unless some content is given to the ideal of the right to life, the day of power will be as barren as a Ford factory.

Even in the midst of the forties certain intellectuals were formulating the new gospel of power. The Bible of it was *The Communist Manifesto*. Its effectiveness was due to its timeliness and its power as a literary document. Not for nothing was Engels steeped in the style of Carlyle. Here roll tremendous periods, here rhythms of repetitions gather into cumuli that must burst into storm,

here the vigor of a whole new class hurls its challenge to all history and rushes to the overthrow of the present organization. Concentration in style, irony at Christian socialism and at German socialism, at bourgeois claptrap about freedom and "self-earned property," vivid personifications, concrete pictures calling up hated tyrannies, all give the *Manifesto* a driving power as effective with the audience for which it was written as ever Carlyle could be for his. One must pay high tribute to the energy of its triumphant assertion that the workingmen are themselves to solve the problem of their own destiny, however one may be disposed to question its oversimplification of history.

But it conceives of the proletariat as a mass and aims for abstract power. It is as mechanical as Bentham's arithmetic. It has lost the human drama and the keen analysis of conflicting interests even among the workingmen themselves that Weitling saw. It asserts nothing of the significance of tools. Its influence was to destroy the poetry of workingmen's expressions. It colored their activities and literature for the next half century. Implicit in the proletarian domination which it postulates there is still struggle, for all its promises. It comes to be a conflict between the blind force of masses stirred to some action and the individual who sees more deeply to ultimate consequences and hidden motives. It finds expression in such a tragedy as the contemporary *Man and the Masses* of Ernst Toller, in fundamental conflict of forces no different from Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*. It is of course too soon to tell what art may come out of the Russian Revolution which is based on Marxian philosophy. But life is so enriching the doctrine that the present is pregnant with poetry.

It is possible that some synthesis between the ideal of a controlling single class and the old gospel of work will produce a workingman's literature of new vigor and graciousness. Carlyle threw out the challenge back in 1831 when he called for "the true epic of our Time—were the genius but arrived who could sing it! Not 'Arms and the Man'; 'Tools and the Man' that were now our Epic." The workmen writers of 1830-1848 spelled out the first page of that epic.

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APPENDIX

THREE SONGS OF PIERRE DUPONT

LE PAIN

Quand dans l'air et sur la rivière
Des moulins se tait le tic-tac,
Lorsque l'âne de la meunière
Broute et ne porte plus le sac,
La famine, comme une louve,
Entre en plein jour dans la maison,
Dans les airs un orage couve,
Un grand cri monte à l'horizon.

On n'arrête pas le murmure
Du peuple quand il dit: J'ai faim.
Car c'est le cri de la nature:
Il faut du pain!

La faim arrive du village
Dans la ville par les faubourgs.
Allez donc barrer le passage
Avec le bruit de vos tambours;
Malgré la poudre et la mitraille,
Elle traverse à vol d'oiseau,
Et sur la plus haute muraille
Elle plante son noir drapeau.
Refrain.

Que feront vos troupes reglées?
La faim donne à ses bataillons
Des armes en plein champ volées
Aux prés, aux fermes, aux sillons:
Fourches, pelles, faux et faucilles;
Dans la ville, au glas du tocsin,
On voit jusqu'à des jeunes filles
Sous le fusil broyer leur sein.
Refrain.

Arrêtez dans la populace
Ceux qui portent fusils et faux;
Faites dresser en pleine place
La charpente des échafauds;
Aux yeux des foules consternées,
Après que le couteau sanglant
Aura tranché leurs destinées,
Un cri s'élèvera du sang.
Refrain.

C'est que le pain est necessaire
Autant que l'eau, l'air et le feu.
Sans le pain on ne peut rien faire:
Le pain est la dette de Dieu.
Mais Dieu nous a payé sa dette
A-t-il refusé le terrain?
Le soleil luit sur notre tête,
Et peut toujours murir le grain.
Refrain.

La terre n'est pas labourée,
Et le blé devrait, abondant,
Jaunir la zône tempérée,
Et du pôle au tropique ardent;
Déchirons le sein de la terre,
Et, pour ce combat tout d'amour,
Changeons les armes de la guerre
En des instruments de labour.
Refrain.

Que nous font les querelles vaines
Des cabinets européens?
Faudrait-il encor pour ces haines
Armer nos bras cyclopéens?
Du peuple océan qui se rue
Craignez le flux et le reflux;
Donnez la terre à la charrue,
Et le pain ne manquera plus.
Refrain.

BREAD

When in the air and down on the river, the tic-tac of the mills is still, when the mule of the miller no more grazes and carries a sack, famine, like a wolf comes stealing by broad daylight into the house. In the air a storm is brooding, a great cry rises to the horizon.

Refrain: One does not stop the rising murmur of the folk when they say, I starve, for it is the cry of nature. One must have bread.

Now from the village hunger comes to the city by way of workmen's homes. Go then, bar the passage with the noise of beating drums. For all the powder and shot, it will cross with flight of bird and on the highest rampart will plant its black flag.

Refrain:

What are your ranks of troops to do? Hunger gives to its battalions arms stolen from meadows, farms and furrows; forks, shovels, pikes and sickles. In the town, at the toll of the tocsin, one sees even young girls bruise their breasts under a gun.

Refrain:

Among the populace arrest those who carry guns and pikes. Put the frame of the scaffold up in the market-place. After the bloody knife-blade, before horror-struck crowds, has cut off their destinies, a cry of blood will be raised.

Refrain:

It is that bread is a need as much as water, air or fire. Without bread one can do naught. Bread is the debt of God, but God has paid us his debt. Has he refused us the earth? The sun shines on our heads and can always ripen the grain.

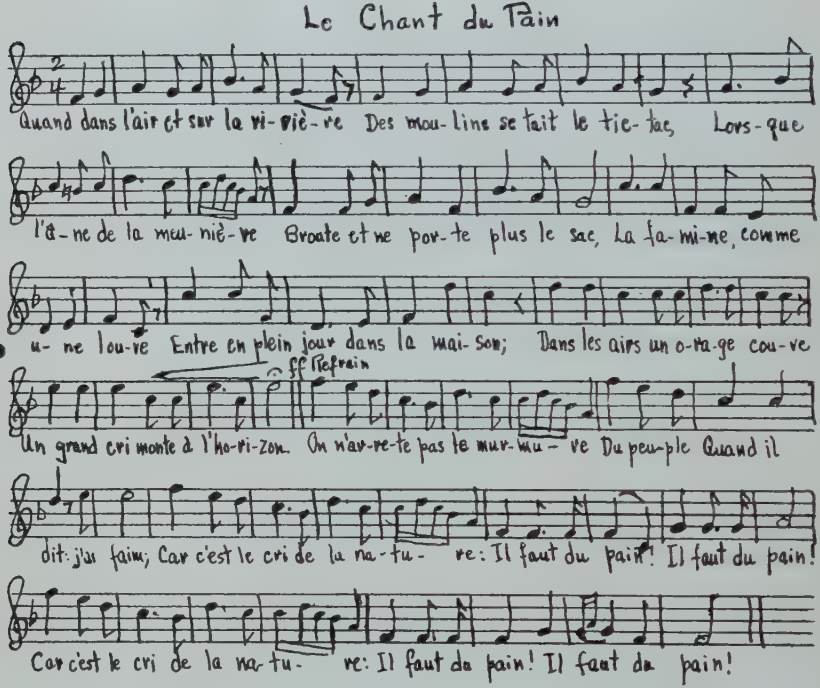
Refrain:

The earth is not overworked and the grain ought abundantly to yellow the temperate zone. Even from the pole to burning tropic, let us tear open the bosom of earth and for this struggle all of love, change the arms of warfare to the tools of honest toil.

Refrain:

What are empty squabbles of European cabinets to us? Should they again arm our strength of Cyclops for these hates? Fear the ebb and flow of the people which is rushing like the sea. Give the earth to the plough and bread will not be wanting.

Refrain:


Le Chant du Pain
Quand dans l'air et sur la ri-viè-re Des mou-lins se fait le tic-tac, Lors-que
l'â-ne de la meu-niè-re Broute et ne por-te plus le sac, La fa-mi-ne, comme
u- ne lou-ve Entre en plein jour dans la mai-son; Dans les airs un o-ra-ge cou-ve
ff Refrain
Un grand cri monte à l'ho-ri-zon. On n'ar-re-te pas le mur-mu- re Du peu-ple Quand il
dit: j'ai faim; Car c'est le cri de la na-tu- re: Il faut du pain! Il faut du pain!
Car c'est le cri de la na-tu- re: Il faut du pain! Il faut du pain!

LE CHANT DES OUVRIERS

Nous dont la lampe, le matin,
Au clairon du coq se rallume,
Nous tous qu'un salaire incertain
Ramène avant l'aube à l'enclume
Nous qui des bras, des pieds, des mains,
De tout le corps luttons sans cesse,
Sans abriter nos lendemains
Contre le froid de la vieillesse,

Aimons-nous, et quand nous pouvons
Nous unir pour boire à la ronde,
Que le canon se taise ou gronde,
Buvons, buvons, buvons
A l'independance du monde!

Nos bras, sans relâche tendus,
Aux flots jaloux, au sol avare,
Ravissent leurs trésors perdus,
Ce qui nourrit et ce qui pars:
Perles, diamants et métaux,
Fruit du coteau, grain de la plaine;
Pauvres moutons, quels bons manteaux
Il se tisse avec votre laine!

Refrain.

Quel fruit tirons-nous des labeurs
Qui courbent nos maigres échines?
Où vont les lots de nos sueurs?
Nous ne sommes que des machines.
Nos Babels montent jusqu'au ciel,
La terre nous doit ses merveilles:
Dès qu'elles ont fini le miel,
Le maitre chasse les abeilles.

Refrain.

Au fils chétif d'un étranger
Nos femmes tendent leurs mamelles,
Et lui, plus tard, croit déroger
En daignant s'asseoir auprès d'elles;
De nos jours, le droit du seigneur
Pèse sur nous plus despotique:
Nos filles vendent leur honneur
Aux derniers courtauds de boutique.

Refrain.

Mal vétus, logés dans des trous,
Sous les combles, dans les décombres,
Nous vivons avec les hiboux

Et les larrons amis des ombres;
Cependant notre sang vermeil
Coule impétueux dans nos veines;
Nous nous plairions au grand soleil,
Et sous les rameaux verts des chênes.

Refrain.

A chaque fois que par torrents
Notre sang coule sur le monde,
C'est toujours pour quelque tyrans
Que cette rosée est féconde;
Ménageons-le dorénavant,
L'amour est plus fort que la guerre;
En attendant qu'un meilleur vent
Souffle du ciel ou de la terre,

Aimons-nous, et quand nous pouvons
Nous unir pour boire à la ronde,
Que le canon se taise ou gronde,
Buvons, buvons, buvons
A l'independance du monde!

SONG OF THE WORKERS

We whose lamp is relighted in the morning at cock-crow, we by our uncertain wages all brought to the forge before dawn, we who with arms, with feet, with hands, with our whole bodies in vain strive ceaselessly to shelter our tomorrows against the cold of old age.

Refrain: Let us love one another and when we can unite to drink all around, whether the cannon be still or growl, let us drink, drink, drink to the freedom of the world.

Our arms, strained without rest, from jealous floods, from greedy soil force their lost treasures that nourish and ornament life, pearls, diamonds, and metals, fruit of hillcock, grain of plain; poor sheep, what good warm coats are woven with your wool!

Refrain:

What fruit is ours from toil that bends our meagre backs? Where do the floods of our sweat go? We are nothing but machines. Our Babels tower to the sky, to us earth owes its marvels: As soon as they have made their honey, the masters chase away the bees.

Refrain:

To a stranger's weakling son, our wives give their full breasts, and he thinks it degrading later if he deigns to sit down near them. In our day the right of overlord weighs more despotically than ever: Our daughters must sell their honor to the lowest curs of the shop.

Refrain:

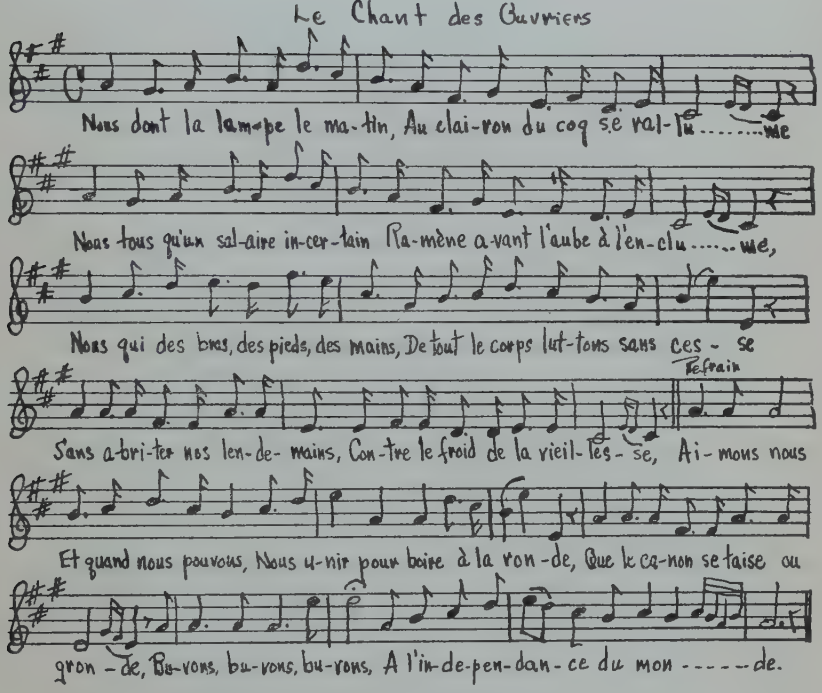
Ill-clothed and lodged in holes under the roof, 'mid rubbish, we live with the owls and thieves, friends of darkness. Yet our red blood flows

impetuous in our veins; we should rejoice in the great sun and under the green branches of oaks.

Refrain:

Every time that our blood flows in torrents on the world, it is always for some tyrants that this dew brings forth fruit. Let us improve this hereafter. Love is stronger than war. While waiting for a better wind to blow from heaven or earth,

Refrain: Let us love one another and when we can unite to drink all around, whether the cannon be still or growl, let us drink, drink, drink to the freedom of the world.



LE TISSERAND

Des deux pieds battant mon métier,
Je tisse, et ma navette passe,
Elle siffle, passe et repasse,
Et je crois entendre crier
Une hirondelle dans l'espace.

Au chanvre, quand j'étais petit,
J'allais casser les chènevotes.
Tantôt je dénichais un nid,
Tantôt déchirais mes culottes:
C'était le beau temps du plaisir.
Le ciel depuis en fut avare.
En Septembre on faisait rouir
Le chanvre dans la grande mare.
Refrain.

Le chanvre cime le plat pays,
Les oiseaux sous sa verte ombrelle
Vont becqueter le chènevis:
Il a fleur mâle et fleur femelle.
De l'une on tire le gros fil
Pour le cordage et la voilure;
L'autre fournit le plus subtil,
Pour toile fine et pour guipure.
Refrain.

Quand l'hiver chasse les oiseaux,
A la veillée on vient en troupe;
Les filles tournent leurs fuseaux,
Et les garçons battent l'étoupe.
Chez un cordier, devenu grand,
J'ai tourné la roue à mon aise,
Et depuis je suis tisserand,
Et le serai tant qu'à Dieu plaise.
Refrain.

Tendre une chaine et l'ajuster
Étampé contre la poitrine,
Nouer les fils et les compter,
C'est minutieux, j'imagine:
Au fond des caves, le travail
Est plus beau, la toile est moins raide;
On perd la vue à fin de bail,
Les lunettes sont un remède.
Refrain.

Encore, si je tissais en l'air,
Comme fait ma soeur l'araignée,
Sans ma lampe j'y verrais clair;
Mais bah! ma vie est resignée,
Il faut des voiles au vaisseau,
Aux morts des linceuls, aux fillettes
Qui me commandent leur trousseau
Des drap de lit et des layettes.

Refrain.

La propreté n'a pas de rang;
Dieu donne le chanvre et l'eau vive.
Faites gagner le tisserand—
Et les laveuses de lessive.
Suffit-il pour être content
De bien manger et de bien boire?
Il faut avoir dans tous les temps
Du linge blanc dans son armoire.

THE WEAVER

With my two feet beating my loom
I weave, and my shuttle passes
It whirs, passes and repasses,
And I think I hear crying
A swallow out in space.

When I was small, I went to break the stalks of flax. Sometimes I robbed a nest; sometimes I tore by breeches. Oh, that was the glorious time of pleasure. The sky has been greedy of it since then. In September we retted the flax out in the great swamp.

Refrain.

The flax loves flat country. The birds under its green umbrella, go to pick at its grains. It has a male flower and a female. From one is spun thick thread for cordage and sail rigging; the other furnishes more delicate for fine cloth and for lace.

Refrain.

When winter drives the birds away, at night we all come trooping, the girls to turn their spindles and the boys to beat out the tow. In the house of a rope-maker, when bigger, I turned the wheel at my ease, and since then I have been a weaver, and shall be so long as God please.

Refrain.

To stretch a warp and adjust it, stamped against by breast, to knot the threads and count them, it is a minute task, I guess: in the depths of cellars, the work is much more fine, the cloth less stiff. One loses his sight into the bargain. But spectacles come to his aid.

Refrain.

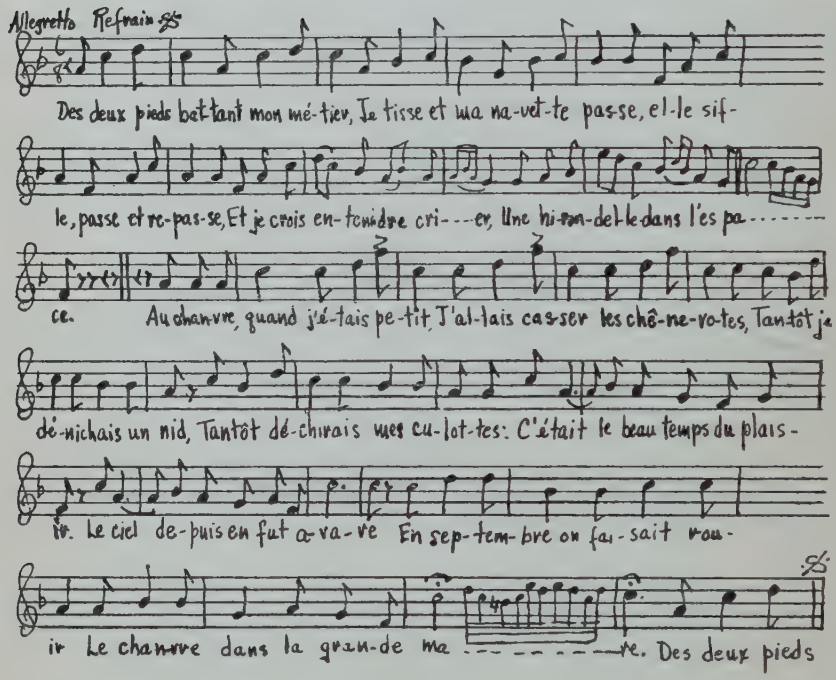
Yet if I spun in the air, like my sister the spider, without my lamp I should see quite clear. But bah! my life is resigned. There must be

sails for ships, for the dead their shrouds, for young maids who order their trousseau from me, sheets for their beds and their babies'.

Refrain.

Cleanness has no rank: God gives flax and living water. Do you make gain for the weaver and for strong washwomen. Is it enough to be content to eat and drink right well? One must have at all times a chest full of fine white linen.

Refrain



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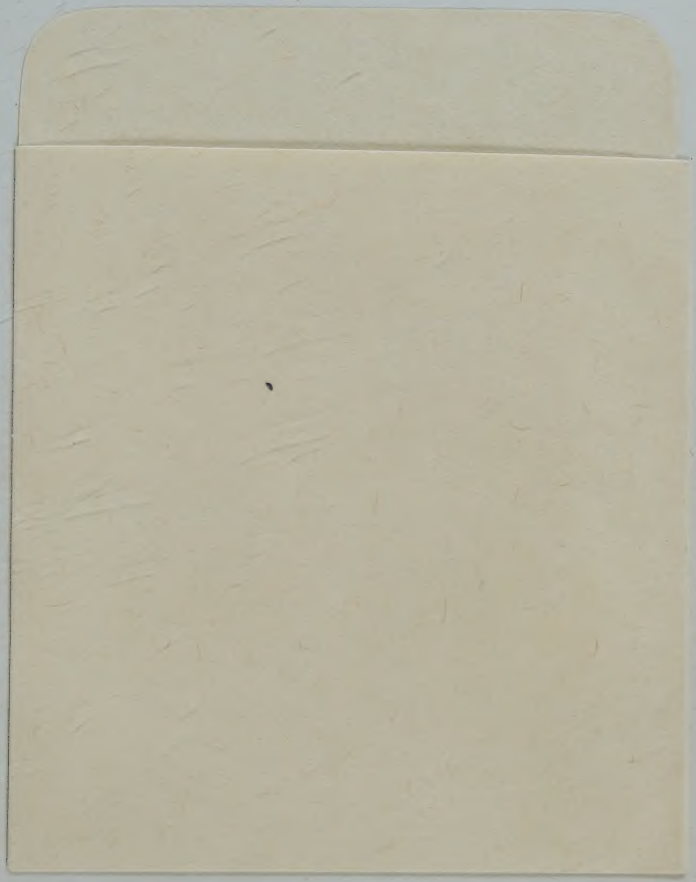
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